INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL of Religious Education

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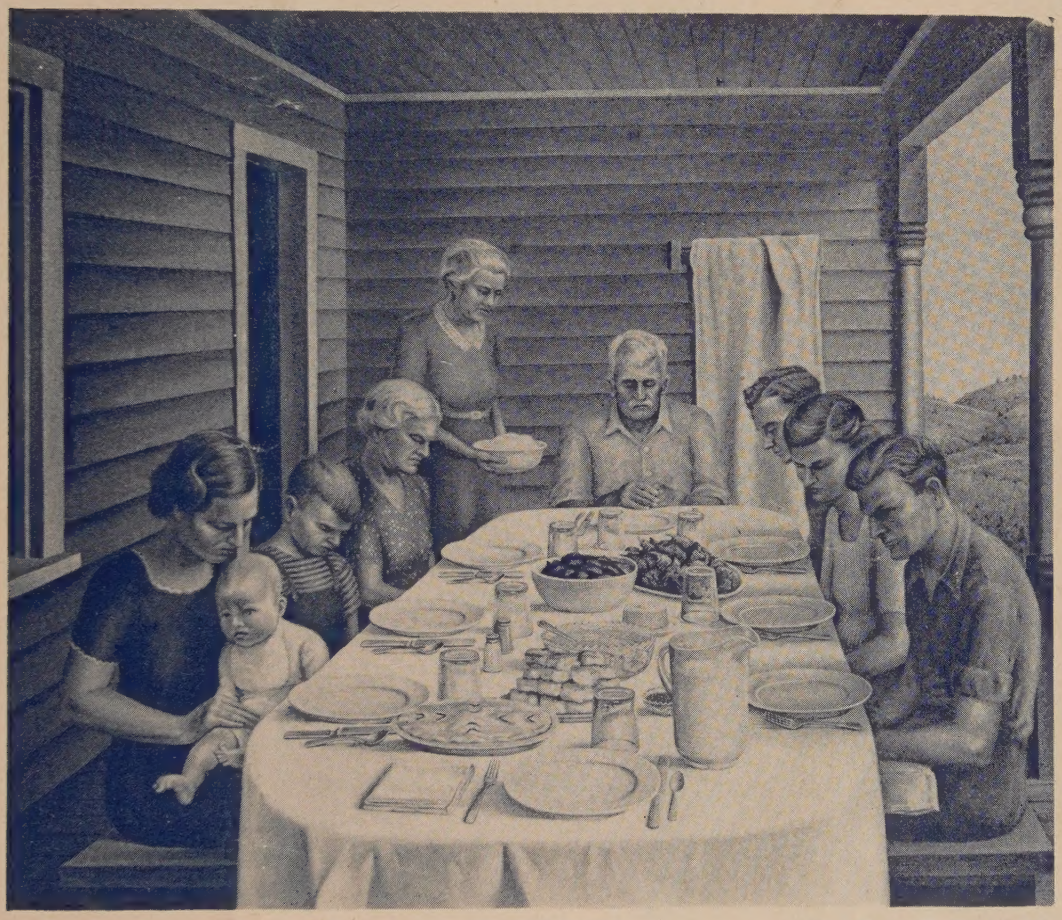

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International Journal of Religious Education

NOVEMBER, 1947

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Ragged Schools and Sunday Schools

THIS OLD PRINT shows one of the first industrial schools in England. It was also a school of religion and was held on Sunday. John Pounds was a humble Christian shoemaker of Portsmouth. About 1800 he became so troubled by the condition of the poor children all about his shop that he devoted every Sunday to helping them. He gathered them into the room above his tiny shop. Convinced that they grew mischievous and even vicious because they were taught no trade, he taught them how to use tools, at the same time mixing Bible stories and instruction in "the three R's." Soon he was giving his evenings as well as his Sundays.

Twenty years before this, in 1780, the newspaper publisher Robert Raikes of Gloucester had started a Sunday school for the most underprivileged children, teaching morals and religion as well as academic subjects. This may or may not have been the first such school, but as Raikes publicized it in his newspaper and gave continued leadership to the movement, he is rightly considered the founder of the Sunday school.

In the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth centuries there were few schools in England open to the masses and these, poor in quality, were maintained largely by the Church of England. "These hardly met the needs of more than half the population," writes Sir John Kirk, "and in the large towns, and in London especially, troops of children roamed the streets, ill-fed, raggedly clothed, quite illiterate and barbarian in manners.

"But the Christ Spirit moved the hearts of men and women here and there, to gather in these neglected and outcast children. Their means were in inverse proportion to their zeal, and barn-like halls, railway arches, garrets and basements, were all the buildings that could be found for these schools which were dubbed Ragged Schools. Shoeless, ragged boys and girls readily came, and the result was pandemonium. But these faithful disciples persevered in the evenings and in the daytime, the main object being the religious improvement of the pupils; reading, writing and arithmetic were regarded as a means to that end. Love and patience won thousands of pupils to civic, industrious and Christly lives."

The success of the movement eventually led, in 1870, to the establishment of a national English system of education. The modern conception of the importance of the child and his training may be traced directly to Raikes and the other devoted workers with these children whom they alone considered important.

When Protestants pray

By Roy L. Smith*

PRAYER is religion's breath of life.

When Jesus' disciples came presenting their supreme request of the Master they said, "Lord, teach us to pray."

There is no religion known among men which does not make large use of prayer, for there seems to be an instinct planted deep within the soul of man which impels him to try to make God hear him.

On the other hand there is a haunting fear of God within the heart of man. He goes on hunting for someone who will bear his message up to the heart of God.

Perhaps it is the reverence in which we hold the Almighty. Perhaps it is the sense of majesty with which we have surrounded deity. Perhaps it is the consciousness of sin which makes man fearful of approaching God. Whatever it is, there is deep within the spirit of man a hesitancy to approach the heavenly Father directly with our requests.

It is one of the fundamental teachings of Protestantism, however, that the right to go into the presence of God with the recital of his needs is every man's right. Unlike the poor lame man at the pool, who had just missed being healed through long and weary years because someone was always getting into the troubled waters ahead of him, we believe that no one can go in unto God ahead of that one who is really in need of God and penitent because of his sins.

This feeling of timidity in the presence of the Most High is easily understandable. In spite of everthing we can do there is certain to be a very considerable mystery surrounding the whole question of God. A finite mind, if it be truly humble, stands in awe of the Infinite. Only the superficial or the conceited would ever consider rushing brazenly into the presence of the Divine. But it was one of Jesus' major aims to remove this sense of strangeness.

There is every indication in the New Testament that Jesus was on the closest and most intimate terms with God. There was nothing in the nature or character of God, nor in the consciousness of Jesus, which acted as a barrier between them. And the Master assured us that any one of us might enjoy this intimate relationship with the Father.

This means that no man need hunt about for some favored soul who is willing to intercede for him. Christ, according to Protestant belief, is our intercessor and we need no other.

The Protestant, for instance, will join with the Roman Catholic in paying high tribute to Mary the mother of Jesus. Anyone who was chosen by God for so holy a responsibility as that of mothering the world's redeemer has earned and deserved the most sincere veneration it is possible for one soul to give to another.

But no Protestant who is familiar with the true doctrine of Protestantism believes that there is the slightest necessity nor reason for pleading with the Mother of our Lord that she intercede with her son in our behalf. Each of us has been assured by Jesus himself that we have a complete and unhampered right to go to him directly, without entrusting the holy errand or message to any other.

Neither does any Protestant believe that it is necessary to enlist the services of any saint, however holy his life may have been, if we have a word for God. We have the right to speak that word in the most intimate privacy of God's heaven directly to the Father himself. And he will hear us.

The simple fact is, according to Protestant understanding of Jesus' teaching, that God is as eagerly seeking man as any man can be earnest in seeking God.

Did not Jesus tell us about the anxious shepherd who went hunting all through the night for his lost sheep, and never gave up until he found it? And did he not say that God was exactly like that shepherd? Did he ever even hint that the Father had turned the search over to someone else, or that he was merely waiting comfortably in heaven until someone brought him word as to the whereabouts of the sheep?

Did Jesus not tell about a father who went running to meet a returning prodigal, and is it not plain that the excited old father went out ahead of all the rest? Did he not watch from the housetop, scanning the horizon for the first sign of the homecomer? Could anyone possibly have been so deeply concerned in that lost boy as was his own father? Was it necessary that anyone come back from the far country to enlist the Father's interest in the boy who had sinned against him?

The Protestant believes that it is the plain teaching of the New Testament that the only credential any man needs in approaching God is a humble and a contrite heart. The only plea God ever hears ahead of any other plea is that of greater need.

When Protestants pray, therefore, they pray with a confidence that they have direct access to the heart of God, that God is their heavenly Father who is waiting up for them even though they do not come home until way late in the night. They turn back to the Father's house confident that it is no servant who is waiting upon the housetop for the first sign of the returning prodigal, but that it is the Father himself.

If the Protestant is taunted with the charge that he lacks reverence, and that he is only overbold in approaching the Father directly without the use of any intermediary, then he must reply that there is no higher reverence than that love which casts out all fear and makes a man feel like a son rather than a stranger or an alien. It was precisely such love that Jesus persuaded us to have toward the Father, for it was such love that he himself manifested toward God.

When Protestants pray it is not necessary for them to employ any other voice than their own; they need offer no saintliness than that which they have been able to attain; they are assured that they are not heard because of their holiness but because of their helplessness.

When Protestants pray they do their own praying, confident that the Father who heareth in secret will respect the privacy of their appeal and treat them with respect and solicitous love.

At least, that is the way they believe Jesus taught them to pray.

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*Editor, the *Christian Advocate*, Chicago, Illinois.

Democracy fails without religion

Religion must be restored to education

By Thoburn T. Brumbaugh*

THE CHIEF AIM of our public schools, long recognized as education in the democratic way of life, is failing of attainment. Confronted by constantly increasing moral laxity and by retrogression in standards of social conduct, we have suddenly discovered that Democracy is in itself not an adequate philosophy of life; as such it no longer commands the loyalty of the youth in our schools, nor of their parents, nor even of those who twice in a quarter-century have been called to fight for democracy's preservation.

Is democracy the supreme end?

Accordingly, those who are responsible for the training of our youth for future citizenship have a deepening conviction that there exists a vital relationship between the principles and practice of democracy, and religious and moral convictions. What we Americans accept as the fundamentals of democracy seem ever more clearly to stem directly from the religious heritage of our Judeo-Christian culture. When these basic moral and spiritual sub-structures are undermined, democracy fails to function.

This, of course, is tantamount to saying that, whereas many have assumed that democratic ideals carry their own impulses to realization, the fact is that they do not. They are effective only as rooted in and motivated by more fundamental philosophical and religious principles. These spiritual and moral foundations, however, are not now as explicit as they were in the formative years of our republic. In recent decades they have been so implicit as to be taken for granted, ofttimes even without consciousness of their existence. Moreover, the "acids of modernity" have long been at work destroying the basic philosophical and moral groundwork of human dignity and mutuality of conduct.

There is, therefore, a growing conviction among serious-minded Americans that democratic principles are not ultimate in human society. They are derivative from something far more elemental in life, and it is high time we were recognizing that, as a moral and spiritual foundation for modern education, democracy is not enough.

From this conviction has grown the widespread discussion as to the need for religious instruction along with or complementing the other curricular content of public education. Various ways of attaining this have been tried, particularly cooperation with the churches in the conduct of weekday schools of religious instruction and the recent trend toward the integration of a certain amount of religious instruction with secular teaching. In addition, the churches themselves have tried parochial schools or religious classes after school hours. None of these approaches has been found entirely acceptable or satisfactory to the American public. None has furnished the moral and spiritual dynamics necessary to resolve the most serious problem confronting us in our so-called democratic way of life.

Problem acute in Japan

On a recent trip to Japan, the writer became even more aware of the inadequacy of democracy alone, and of the fundamental relationship between religion and democracy on the one hand and between religion and education on the other. Inasmuch as our Allied victory over Japan was so largely an American triumph, the United States Army, through its Civil Information and Education Section of General Headquarters in Tokyo, has been greatly concerned of late with the revision and reformation of the Japanese educational system along more democratic lines. How thoroughgoing this is to be can be foreseen in the change from a semi-European type of organization to a more American form of curriculum and system of training throughout all the schools of Japan. To this Japanese educators seem in general quite reconciled and are even entering with enthusiasm into the proposed process of democratization, including deletion from textbooks of materials devoted to indoctrination in the spirit of nationalism and materialism heretofore so characteristic of Japan.

Deletion is of itself quite easy—but how does one go about teaching democracy in an educational system? To be sure, there are some elements of Greek culture, some materials from the Italian and European Renaissance, some episodes and literature from the French Revolution, and of course some British and some American documents upon which to rely for the inculcation of human and social values according to democratic pattern of life. But from whence come the philosophical concepts to undergird and the moral dynamic to bring to realization such ideals? Granted that as a consequence of Japan's disillusionment in the outcome and results of the war, her ancient religious ideologies are now bankrupt: Confucian, Buddhist and Shinto,—what then, when these faiths have been even further discredited by modern science and naturalism, may be relied upon to enforce the democratic ideas and practices envisioned in the new Japan and its reformed educational system?

It is at this point that certain of America's educators in Japan today profess to have made a genuine discovery. In spite of our fear of religious bigotry in American education and our determination to keep church and state from an alliance in our schools, they say, we of America in all our teaching in the democratic tradition, assume and unconsciously depend upon a background of the Judeo-Christian religious interpretation of life and of the moral code which was evolved therefrom. They now realize that

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The recent clear-cut division at the Paris Economic Conference arising from the Marshall Plan and Russia's refusal to cooperate makes it very clear that we are to be engaged in a continuing major competition and clash of economic systems and of ideologies. It is the greatest basic competition of all history. It is a competition between the ideology of materialism sponsored by the Communists, which denies the Fatherhood of God, depreciates the worth of the individual human being, and worships the things of the earth controlled by rulers of men, as opposed to an ideology based on the fundamental concepts of our religious beliefs, humbly recognizing the Fatherhood of God, emphasizing the worth and dignity of the individual human being, safeguarding individual freedom, and teaching service and compassion and mercy . . .

We hope and pray and endeavor that this basic competition may be decided in the minds and hearts of men with the grace of God, without resort to force. But if this peaceful victory for our way of life is to come to pass, the moral foundation of the people of this North American continent of ours is of prime importance.

HAROLD E. STASSEN, *in the opening presidential address at the 21st International Sunday School Convention, Des Moines, Iowa, July 23.*

complete lack of such spiritual and moral foundations for democratic thought in Japan presents an almost insuperable problem. For how, they ask, without importing to the Orient all of the excess baggage of sectarian dogma and divisiveness, can the basic religious and moral principles of our American democratic thought-life be transplanted in time to make possible the effective transformation in education which we see as so necessary if Japan is to become one of the bulwarks of democracy in our world?

On the authority of General Douglas MacArthur this may be frankly said to be one of the greatest dilemmas confronting our American occupation forces in Japan. It is the same impasse of which we are increasingly conscious in educational life within the United States. Perhaps we should have resolved the situation at home before setting out to export our democratic ideas to lands less grounded in the philosophical foundations of universal brotherhood. Yet now the world cannot wait until we reach entirely consistent conclusions on the home front. We must therefore face the same critical issues both at home and abroad, with the fate of humanity depending upon our attitudes and our actions.

This awakening might of course be epoch making in our educational history. It may be that this discovery of moral and spiritual elements in our American culture which we have been taking for granted will be of aid to us in our readjustments to meet world-wide post-war conditions. If we in the United States could again become keenly conscious of our divine heritage and prepare our own souls as well as our cultural and educational institutions for advance in the ethical and spiritual pre-suppositions of democracy, the future would be brighter in all our relationships, even with Russia.

MacArthur calls on the churches

It is from such convictions that the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers in the Pacific draws his willingness to permit Christian missionaries to return to Japan even before ordinary business and cultural representatives. This also explains the calling of Dr. Paul H. Vieth of Yale Divinity School to a year of service as an adviser to the American and Japanese educational authorities in Tokyo with respect to religious education and character building in Japan's educational system. In like manner has Father Flannigan of Boys' Town been called for a period of relationship with General Headquarters there. From such evidences we may see deeply into the mind and heart of General MacArthur as he writes to a trusted friend in this country:- "In Japan today Christianity has an opportunity without counterpart since the birth of Christ. If this opportunity is fully availed of by the leaders of the Christian faith, a revolution of the spirit may be expected which may more favorably alter the course of civilization than has any economic or political revolution in the history of the world."

Of such reforms also are our missionary leaders thinking today as they plan for a new emphasis in Christian education in Japan. For over a half-century we have maintained Christian schools there, and these institutions have made large contributions in the development of leadership as the Japanese in the last century opened their country to western ideas and influences. Education then, however, fell into formal and stereotyped patterns and our Christian schools were drawn into conformity rather than maintaining the original spirit of reform. Today again the opportunity comes for Christianity to take the lead in creating in Japan the type of school which will not only teach democracy and western culture but will exemplify and impart to its students the Christian interpretation of life.

It is in such a setting that our Christian educational authorities in Japan must think, not merely of reconstructing the physical equipment of twenty-seven Protestant schools destroyed or badly damaged in the war, but of reforming and reinvigorating the educational opportunities offered under Christian auspices with the spiritual dynamic of faith in the Christ-like God and the quality of human relations implicit in such a religious philosophy.

Especially is this true in the field of higher education. Junior and Senior high schools and even undergraduate college life are all important for the inculcation of Christian principles and motivation along with education for

subsistence in the modern world. For unless we can produce Christian doctors, educators, scientists, technicians, journalists, lawyers and even Christian politicians, we shall have failed in our program both of evangelism and of education.

In harmony also with this conviction was the recent decision of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, along with the Federal Council of Churches, to seize this time of opportunity to create in Japan a great Christian university—international, interdenominational, and co-educational—and so to undergird it with Christian principles as well as with Christian teachers, as to make it an outstanding institution of graduate and professional studies for the training of Christian leaders in vocational fields into which young people now are being led.

Democracy is a product

Thus, belatedly perhaps but at least fortunately, in our relationships with other nations and peoples, we begin to see that democracy is a product and not an inevitable concomitant of culture and philosophy. As ideals for human conduct, democratic principles are no more valid and dynamic than the world-ground to which they give expression.

If, therefore, the Judeo-Christian concept of human dignity grounded in and supported by cosmic and divine attributes of goodness, beauty, love and truth, is as basic to civilization as it seems in a world gravely in danger of casting off all moral restraints, then surely it is needful for education and all those concerned for the training of youth in the ethics of democracy to give time and place for the inculcation of religious principles along with the other necessary elements of modern education. Whether this be accomplished by released time teaching or otherwise becomes secondary to the importance of having it done. Insofar as our American cultural patterns have given us a common denominator of moral and spiritual philosophy, let this be taught by teachers of conviction and competency within our schools. When there is difference as to objects or objectives of worship, let these be taught by those who desire their youth to be instructed in a particular tradition, provided only that the desiderata of conduct be found in keeping with Judeo-Christian and democratic principles. Above all, let it be quickly and widely realized that democracy in education cannot reproduce itself.

A successful weekday program

Enrolment reaches one hundred per cent

By Edith F. Osteyee*

THE NARBERTH, PENNSYLVANIA, Community Council of Weekday Christian Education completed its fifth year of successful work in the spring of 1947. For the two latest years, 1945-46 and 1946-47, the enrolment in the classes in religion was one hundred per cent in the grades in which these courses were offered: the second, third, fourth and fifth grades. The Roman Catholic leaders hold separate classes for their children. All the other boys and girls—Protestant, Jewish, and non-Christian, totaling about two hundred—are enrolled in the community program and taught at the same hour in their own public school rooms. The classes are held for one hour each week, just preceding dismissal on Wednesday afternoons.

Narberth, a suburb of Philadelphia, with about five thousand population, has five Protestant churches: Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran, Episcopalian, and Baptist. The Council of Weekday Christian Education is composed of the pastor and two qualified lay leaders from each church; representatives of the public school Board of Education and teaching staff; and representatives of the Parent-Teacher Association. The churches bear most of the expense, although generous contributions are received each year from the P.T.A. and the Rotary Club.

Every weekday religious education leader has not only the educational qualifications of a public school teacher, but is also an active spiritual leader in her own communion. While she receives a small remuneration for her teaching, she serves for the joy of the task rather than a monetary reward. In addition to a teacher for each of the eight rooms, a supervisor and two substitute teachers are provided.

When Narberth began weekday religious education five years ago, it was decided to hold classes *after* school in the public school. For three years this procedure was followed with diminishing attendance. Some of the children not attending the classes would spend the hour following school dismissal on the playground: this was too much for many of the other youngsters whose parents had signified their desire that their boys and girls take religious

* Narberth, Pennsylvania.

Bauer-Cotterell

There are very concrete advantages in holding weekday classes in public school buildings.

education work at this hour. Parents of other children felt that it was too much to ask their children to remain relatively quiet an hour after their school day.

In the summer of 1945 the Community Council of Weekday Christian Education approached the public school Board of Education with the suggestion that one hour of time be released during the school day each week for twenty weeks. This was agreed upon. It is significant that every child in the four grades included was enrolled in the following year, and that no one was absent except when he was also absent from public school. The same high record of enrolment and attendance prevailed in 1946-47.

Everyone involved in the weekday religious education program in Narberth feels that their system has manifold advantages over any other. The benefits of released time have already been listed. Because the program is conducted on released time in the public school, the children are right at hand, thus being prompt and regular in attendance. It is alleged that Narberth has the only weekday religious education program in Pennsylvania with one hundred per cent enrolment, although there are others that claim from 95 to 99 per cent of potential enrolment. It is probable that these, like ours, owe their large participation to the fact that instruction is conduced on released time in the public school.

Other advantages over using church buildings are manifold. Supervision is simplified because all of the classes are held at the same time in adjoining buildings. While worship facilities are not as adequate as in a church, yet by the use of portable worship centers this phase of the training is not neglected. Physical facilities are much better in school than in church: the rooms are well heated and ventilated; the desks and chairs of proper shape and size; the lighting, both natural and artificial, is good; there is ample blackboard and bulletin space; the toilets are sufficient in number, type, and convenience. Because of these advantages, discipline problems are at a minimum.

When asked what has made Narberth weekday Christian education so successful, the reply is one word: cooperation. The Council of Weekday Christian Education and the public school Board of Education are in perfect agreement. The latter is recognized as the final authority and control within the framework set by law and state regulation. The various church leaders in the Council work together in harmony to uphold the unified teaching program they have adopted. Because weekday religious education classes are built right into the school schedule, just as art or music classes, the public school teachers cooperate fully.

The weekday religious teachers come from five denominations, but because they are trained and experienced, they work together to guide the boys and girls so that there is progression and development from grade to grade. The parents, seeing the improvement in their children's attitude and conduct, as well as their increased knowledge and appreciation of the Bible, cooperate to the fullest extent.

The pupils like the work so much that the two fifth grade rooms are petitioning the Council to hold weekday religious education classes for the sixth grade next year. Their reaction is also expressed by the boy who, at the beginning of the second term, forgot to return the card signifying his parents' consent to attend. This meant he had to stay out of class. He said, "I did not know how much I like 'Bible class' until I had to stay out one period. I'll never miss again. Weekday religious school is *fun!*"

In spite of getting no salary you [church school workers] are the best paid folks in all the world. Back of you I see the hamlets and the cities from which you come, the little chapels and the great cathedrals, the tens of thousands of boys and girls who look to you for spiritual inspiration. Your influence may mean the difference between a mediocre life and a great life. The feeling that one has built oneself into the life of youth is the most glorious, rewarding and eternal compensation anyone can have.

ROY L. SMITH, *at the Sunday School Superintendents' Dinner held July 24, during the International Sunday School Convention.*

How does your garden grow?

What vacation church schools mean to the children who go

By Lillian Moeschler*

THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATOR is a gardener. Sunday by Sunday he prepares the soil, so that he may plant the seeds of truth, right living, and love for God and fellow man. These young seedlings must be nourished and cultivated so that they continue to grow into strong, healthy plants which will both produce Christian personalities and advance the Kingdom of God on earth. The vacation church school can be thought of as the cultivating and pruning process which is necessary to all growth. By its very nature—longer periods of time, consecutive days, more varied activities—it becomes the place where Christian teachings and precepts are put into daily practice.

The following case reports were made by members of the Boston Summer Service Group to show how important the vacation church school program is in the cultivation of Christian character. These are cited with the full realization that the home, other phases of Christian education, and group work have made and must continue to make their imprint upon the life of the individual. No one phase of Christian education can do the task alone—it is a cooperative and interdependent enterprise.

The twenty-eight vacation church schools which cooperated with the City Missionary Society (Congregational) developed the theme "Living Together in Our World." This was developed according to age levels and interests. All incidents cited here came from teachers of children in these schools.

Developing leadership

One junior department formed itself into a "Friendly City." The children elected their officers, including a mayor. They drew up their own code to enable them to live as friendly Christian citizens. The student worker who was the leader of this group, reported the following:

"My little mayor of our 'Friendly City' is a good example of how the vacation church school can help mold the life of a child. When I think of the 'chance' we took electing him head of boys and girls in grades four through six, when he had only finished the third grade, I marvel at the way it worked out. I don't believe the child had ever assumed leadership before, nor had he ever received so much recognition. He took his task *very* seriously. He stood by for duties long after the other children had left and sometimes came in the afternoons or escorted me on home calls.

"He worked cooperatively with *all* children and never bossed them. When they tried to 'tell' him, he would just smile or look puzzled at the suggestion and then come and confer with me. The children liked him and called him 'mayor.' I believe this name will stick to him as far as these children are concerned.

"I do not know what Robert was like before vacation church school, but I do know he was transformed into *somebody* for three short weeks. Concerning Christian growth, I think he must have gained something here. Certainly he will not be able to think of his success and pleasure as mayor of the 'Friendly City' in days or months to come—or even years—without connecting it with the church and the teachings of Jesus. With this experience in his background, it is most probable he will always cleave to the church, follow its teachings, and become an active member.

"Therefore, the vacation church school for this boy becomes a living remembrance which may motivate his life in future years. It may even be the signpost at the fork of the road."

Religion in recreation

A group of junior and junior high boys expanded their vacation church school program by meeting three afternoons each week for recreation and craft. Baseball, of course, was a favorite and they wanted to play another team. Arrangements were made to play a non-church team on the field of Boston Common. Our student leader commented that swearing by the opposing team was "terrific." Our boys had made their own department rules and one was, "No swearing." During the heat of the game, one of our boys forgot himself and swore. Immediately the others took him to task: "Cut it out. *We* don't do that."

The boy may forget himself again, or the habit may be

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broken, but he has learned from his pals and team-mates that *Christians do act differently.*

Religion in daily living

In the younger departments of our Sunday church schools many seeds from packets called "Sharing," "Taking Turns," and "Thinking About Others" are planted. Teachers know that the children are able to give the correct verbal answers, and that they can repeat the corresponding Bible verses. Frequently, the thoughtful teacher wonders how well these truths become a part of the daily actions of the children. Time is too short on Sundays to include the activities and experiences which will provide the teacher with the key. Here is where the vacation church school can play such an important part in the total Christian education program.

After vacation school Earl could more easily repeat, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." He had been one of a group making stuffed animals for the Red Cross. He had struggled patiently to do the necessary sewing and, when finished, he tied a bow around the dog's neck. When all the animals had been completed, the children had a worship service in which they presented and dedicated their gifts for children overseas. All had placed theirs on the worship center but Earl. When asked if he were going to give his too, he stammered, "Please let me keep him a while longer." At the end of the morning Earl placed his dog with the others and started to leave the room, but he returned and went back. He picked up the dog and, holding it against his cheek, said, "Be a good little dog and make some little boy or girl happy."

A group of very young primaries who had not yet had public school experience, were having their first group experience in the vacation church school. The theme, mentioned earlier, was very apropos for this school because it was conducted in a small chapel, limited for space and with little equipment. The corner designated for the primary group had a table top placed on four milk cases, and more milk crates served as chairs. There was a "talking rug," and a cloth over large sized chairs which served as a picture screen. Every minute of the afternoon everyone had to consider the other people in the room.

This primary group made a roll "movie" showing all the friendly helpers in their community. For lack of storage space, the box to hold the movie was not brought in until after the movie was completed. To the dismay of the children, they found the roll too long for the box. They sat on their "talking rug" and thought out the problem. "Could we cut some off the bottom?" asked a child. They looked, and decided a wee bit could be cut off there and also more off the top. Two children were chosen to do the cutting while the rest helped to unroll the movie. All went well until they reached almost the last quarter and there, reaching to the very top of the paper, was a tall house. Betty paused, studied the picture for a minute, turned and said, "John, would you mind very much if I cut off the top of your house?"

If that same natural consideration started here, can be carried on by the home and other groups, these children will produce fruits of friendly thoughtfulness for the rights and feelings of others.

One world—one family

We know that children are born without prejudices—that they develop them as a result of adult teachings and attitudes. This was plainly apparent in the case of Mary. She lived in a community where there were many Negro families; she met them in school as well as on the streets, but her fears of them were very great. The first day she attended the primary department, the student teacher noticed that she deliberately chose a chair as far away from any Negro as possible. Later, during the recreation period, she refused to stand next to and hold the hand of a Negro girl. One unwise high school assistant tried to force the issue and a scene resulted. During the department staff meeting at the conclusion of the morning, the matter was discussed. An adult knew that the child was reflecting the attitudes and actions of her mother. She pointed out that it would be a slow process to tear down barriers and fears and try to erect a foundation of friendliness. Plans were made to help the child.

The theme gave many opportunities to discuss the friendly helpers in our community, including the jolly Negro policeman and the mailman. Slowly, changes were noted. How delighted the staff was during the last week when Mary said one day to a Negro boy, "Here, Johnnie, give me your hand."

The following is copied from a letter received by one of our student workers, upon her return to a mid-western state, from one of her summer pupils. There is a basis here for an on-going program as a result of the vacation church school program:

"I saw a poster the other day which read, 'Let's keep all our kids free from race and creed fights.' That poster and what you taught us in summer school gave me an idea. I'm going to try and get some children together and start a club—'The Free American Club.' Like the idea? My mother and I certainly were pleased that you gave me the map. I'm making some houses to put on it. And up in my room on the wall is the 'Code for Christian Citizens.'"

The harvest

Unlike the gardener, the Christian educator is seldom present at harvest-time. During the past summer, our vacation church school program reached 2425 children in the area called Metropolitan Boston. We employed twenty young people of college or graduate student level from all parts of the United States. Some of them will never return to this region so may never see the fruits of their summer labor. We ourselves can never keep track of all the children whose lives were touched. Therefore we may never know how many seeds flourish and produce fruit-bearing trees. It is also quite possible that the teachers themselves grew by the very contacts herein mentioned with the boys and girls. Each of these teachers will continue in his task, maintaining faith that his contribution, although small, when added to the faith and good works of many others does count in the knowledge of God.

When each phase of the Christian education program becomes a part of an integrated whole—when vacation religious education complements the seed planting of the Sunday and weekday religious education programs; when cultivating and pruning becomes an on-going process in the home as well as in the church; then, and only then, shall our gardens produce Christian personalities. How does your garden grow?

Why not use veterans?

By George S. Odiorne*

ONE OF OUR GREATEST SOURCES of vitality and new blood in the field of religious education is, I believe, being left virtually untapped in ninety per cent of our church schools today. I refer, of course, to that group of young men and women who served in the armed forces of their country during the recent emergency. In the average church this group consists of about ten per cent or more of the total membership, but my observation has been that less than one out of ten of them takes an active part in the religious education program of the church. That this is deplorable is made doubly true by the fact that the majority of them possess training, background and experience that would adapt them readily to educational work.

What part, actually, are veterans taking in our Sunday schools? Take, for example, the case of young Al Green. He entered the army in 1941, and was sent to Fort Knox where he became an instructor in tank gunnery. It is true that there are no gunnery classes in Sunday school, and the subject matter he taught has no particular relevance to its work. However, he did learn to teach, and he learned by going to school himself before taking a class. He learned that in order to teach, one must know his subject thoroughly. He must then organize his material for each lesson ahead of time. He must present it in a clear and interesting manner. And he must evaluate the extent of learning of his students. These qualities he could readily transfer to the teaching of Sunday school material. A couple of times after his discharge he attended his old Sunday school class, where he saw his old teacher using methods that would have caused Al a reduction in grade had he used them in the army. He was "talked down" to, he was preached at as though he were six years old, and his teacher's ill preparation was revealed in his attempts to bluff through when he did not know the answer to a pertinent, intelligent question from the class.

Al is but one case among the many potential leaders in our Sunday schools who have not been used. Former recruiting sergeants could be asked to run membership campaigns; physical instructors to organize athletic groups and teams; public relations men to advertise the work of the Sunday school and to edit school and church papers; motion picture projectionists to assist with visual education presentations; and photographers to record permanent photographic histories of the work of the schools. Musicians, clerks and people with countless other skills could be channeled into various jobs in religious education. Even if the skills acquired by former pilots or seamen or foot soldiers seem quite unrelated to church school work, they have given to the veterans the poise, maturity, and assurance needed by leaders.

There are three cardinal requirements which the church school must meet in order to gain the services of these people:

1. The leadership must be of high quality. The veteran is used to good, competent leadership that knows where it is going and how it intends to get there.
2. The goal must be made clearly worth achieving. The standards of excellence must be high.
3. There must be an inspirational or zestful quality about the work to which they are assigned. The idea of "Let the vets do the dishes; they're used to KP" is out. It must not be a "made" job, nor a left over that nobody else wants. The job should present a challenge to the ex-service man to achieve a worthwhile but difficult goal.

The average veteran desires to become a worthwhile citizen of his church and country. This energy, properly inspired and led, can carry a Sunday school to new heights of achievement.

* Mr. Odiorne, a veteran who served for four years in the Army, including thirty months in the Pacific Theatre, and attained the rank of Captain, is now actively engaged in Sunday school work at the Kilburn Memorial Presbyterian Church in Newark, New Jersey. He is a teacher and also serves as secretary to the general superintendent. His opinions expressed here are the result of his observations during his eighteen months in religious education work since his return.

The veterans like our church

By Millard G. Roberts*

AFTER SERVING nearly four years as an Air Forces Chaplain, in constant contact with servicemen in this country and overseas, being invited to serve on the staff of a large city church seemed a pleasant and peaceful prospect. Until I began my work, it did not occur to me that several hundred other veterans had returned to the same church, and that my ministry was to be a continuous one rather than completely altered by return to civilian status. I found the veterans had returned to their own church in their own community because it meant a part of home to them. During those years away, they had magnified their good memories of the church, as they had of old sweethearts, old hang-outs, and old friends.

In returning with this picture in mind, some of the GI's forgot how the church was actually run. Some were disappointed when the home church didn't measure up to their dream standards, and they weren't averse to criticizing it. Of all the criticisms, one really hit home as I heard it repeated many times during those first few months. "We don't want any of this pepped-up rally-round type of Christianity," the vets would say. "If our religion isn't deep enough and strong enough to make a fulfilling experience without a special program just for us, we want no part of it."

My problem was to make the church meaningful to these men once more, by taking it out of a dream-world and breathing some life into it. I soon decided I wasn't that much of a leader, and fell back on our church itself to do the job. Our vets were coming to church, more and more

* Associate Minister, Bryn Mawr Community Church, Chicago, Illinois. Formerly Chaplain, with rank of Major, in the Army Air Corps.

of them every Sunday morning. They came because they needed God, or were lonely, or because they were suddenly lost in a home community which they had left as boys and returned to as men. Our church staff realized standard church organization techniques wouldn't work here, so we scrapped them. Instead of trying to put over the frontal approach to religion these men rejected, we fell back on the worship services and organization of our adult membership. Then we made it easy for the vets to form their own social group, and let them run it without directional supervision for nearly a year-and-a-half.

Bryn Mawr Community Church, in the heart of Chicago's South Side, has a great sanctuary, beautiful music at services, and a preaching ministry which is informed, able, and unafraid. From forty to sixty of our ex-GI's never missed Sunday morning worship. Dr. Ray Freeman Jenney, the minister, had kept in close touch with every veteran connected with the church during the war years. Now he decided they could be fitted directly into the church program, rather than treated as a "special" group. Through his leadership, positions of responsibility were opened to them. As ushers, assistant treasurers, and scoutmasters the veterans found a place of service as soon as they returned home. Five of the most important offices in the church were made available to older veterans who returned.

Besides this direct connection, a special social group was formed by returning veterans in the autumn of 1945. All phases of the planning and leadership of the group were left in the hands of veterans and young women of the church. The same "Strictly Social," which might seem a brash title to some, was chosen by the club. They simply meant they were not interested in the worship-speaker-refreshment-recreation type of program commonly followed by young adult church groups. In fact, there was little or no program of any kind for over a year. Still, more than fifty young men and women appeared each Tuesday night for a social get-together.

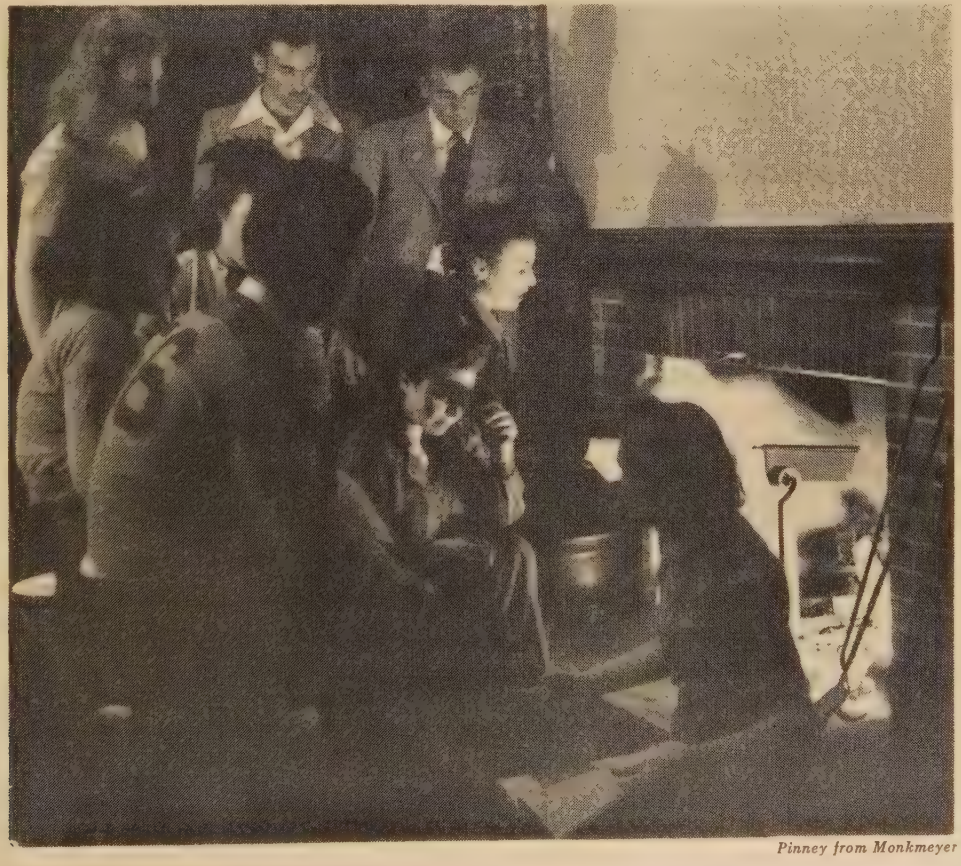
As adviser to "Strictly Social," my contacts were on the plane of friendly participation, not staff leadership or control. Winning a city church league softball championship during the summer of 1946 had aided in fitting the group more closely together, and had placed the members on a first-name acquaintanceship basis.

When the loosely-organized club began to bog down through lack of an interesting program, I realized a catch-as-catch-can approach would not last forever. Attendance began to fall off, and we saw another demonstration of the fact that real democracy can have failures as well as successes. In such a situation, we decided to use more definite staff leadership to organize "Strictly Social" on a more compact level. A constitution was written and approved, standing committees set up, and a two-hour weekly program consisting of entertainment, business-meeting, refreshments, and recreation arranged for. Attendance soon went past any previous level, and the group ended the year in first rate condition.

Although "Strictly Social" was definitely a church-sponsored organization, religious services were never suggested for its members. It was felt that the regular religious life of the church fully filled this need.

In less than a year, ten couples from the group were married in the church, and the social contacts which the club made possible between fine young women and returning servicemen demonstrate the real service the organization performed. Combining the regular religious functions of the church, on an adult level, with such a program of Christian fellowship had achieved indirectly what any amount of planned "integration in religious living" programs for veterans would never have accomplished.

And our contacts with returning veterans did not stop



The young people gathered each Tuesday night for a social get-together.

Pinney from Monkmeyer

there. Several became teachers of church school classes, two became scoutmasters, and in a few months more than twenty had joined the church. In the autumn of 1946, more than forty members of "Strictly Social" participated in the church's annual fund-raising campaign, securing pledges for more than $4000 toward a budget of $65,000. Their part in this work was simply suggested to them, with no pressure of any kind used.

The religious perceptions and attitudes of those who have become church school teachers are most gratifying. These ex-soldiers prepare carefully, present their material with sincerity and understanding, and have a real following among church school youngsters who both respect and appreciate them.

Through such contacts, our church never lost step with the situation when its veterans returned, for it assimilated them through respecting them, not through a "specialized approach" for a group of "different" people in its membership. Besides training future leaders, the principle of participation on a completely equal level with adults in the general church program has put meaning back into the church for our returned veterans.

Is tying trout flies in your curriculum?

A message from a summer camp to Christian teachers

By Melvin Dorsett*

SEVERAL YEARS AGO Mr. Dorsett began writing enthusiastically to his friend the Editor about the plans he had under way in the church to which he had just gone. These included a handcraft shop in the church and a summer camp supported by the church. The Editor, with an eye on the future, said, "When you have an experience you want to write about, send us the story." This is the second article that has grown out of the correspondence carried on since. The first appeared in the Journal last June under the title "A Handcraft Workshop in the Church." There may be a third dealing with the summer camp started and operated by his church. Mr. Dorsett is doing a pioneer work in saving the so-called "activities program" from being kept up as mere "busy work" or dropped because it does not turn out foreign missionaries.

Even though tying trout flies is a long way from the readers' experience in local church service, the principles at work here come very close to his purposes and possible methods.

DICK WAS VERY MUCH the usual American boy, except that he did not finish what he started. He began with enthusiasm on many projects and then failed to complete them. This habit had begun while he was ill for a long period and was being watched with too much solicitude.

For example, when his church school group studied about people of the Orient, all were furnished with pliable strips of bamboo and encouraged to bend these into bird and butterfly shapes, covering the frame with attractive paper. Thus they made a kite similar to those made by the youth of the Far East countries. Dick started three kites. Each was very elaborate in design. However, on the day the class started for the park with the immense Chinese dragon kite which had been borrowed for the occasion and their own very attractive kites, Dick had only a store-bought American kite in his hands. When the class refused to let him fly it he protested angrily but down deep he knew that once more he had failed.

The leader of activities for the church school decided that the time had come to make a call at Dick's home. When he arrived Dick's mother greeted him with a friendly "Good morning" and then hastened to add, "I believe I know why you are here. Before you tell me, would you step back into the room there?" The mother then pointed to a beautiful piece of furniture. She asked, "Isn't that lovely?" and indeed it was. She stated, "Dick's father made that. Now turn around! What do you think of that horrible half finished thing? *Dick's father started to make that!*" So that was the story. While the father could do good work, he left things unfinished. No doubt there was some relation between Dick's poor habits and those of the father; the mother had excused him because his father was that way.

The leader left the home realizing that Dick's reeducation was going to take even more of patient guidance than he had at first realized. Several projects were tried which had a real appeal at the beginning. Dick proved himself continuously to be a strong starter and a very poor finisher regardless of who the leader was.

Finally it was decided that the summer camp of Dick's church offered the best possible opportunities for helping this boy to become efficient and dependable in his work. When churches say camping, they usually mean a leadership training conference built around class instruction groups. These conferences serve a real purpose for youth, who are ready for these intensive experiences. But this church believed that most children need first a free-choice,

* Minister of Education, First Plymouth Congregational Church, Denver, Colorado.

happy activity experience in the out-of-doors for a part of each year. The church people knew that this period of learning by doing, made purposive by understanding guidance, and enriched by wholesome fellowship and normal physical experiences, can be the most fruitful investment made in a child's education.

It was into this kind of camping that Dick was enrolled. He responded in normal fashion to the joyous opportunities which surrounded him except at the point of his one great fault. He just did not see the pleasure or even the necessity of staying with a project which he felt was work until it was neatly and fully finished.

Now Dick very much liked to fish. He scattered his tackle along the streams in the careless fashion of one who had received too much too easily. Soon he was running short of trout flies and of money with which to buy more. He, of course, tried borrowing from more careful campers, most of whom tied their own flies and tapered leaders. This source of supply did not prove fruitful. The boys knew that Dick was capable of providing for himself and in boy-group fashion they began to put the pressure on. Group pressure properly tempered by a mature counselor is, in many instances, the best aid to individual guidance in the process of character development.

Dick came to the fishing instructor to ask if he could learn to tie flies. He was reminded that he had had the same instruction as that of the campers from whom he had been trying to borrow. He admitted that he had then thought it would be easier to buy what he wanted. When the leader was sure that the boy was ready to work he carefully instructed him again in the not so difficult art of wrapping silk and feather around a hook in order to make a lure for fish.

Dick started carefully on his first serious attempt at doing a tedious bit of creative work for himself. The counselor busied himself at near-by tasks, sensing somehow that the camper had come to a long needed crisis in his growth which could mark the beginning of new habits of work and a changed outlook on life.

At the end of an hour Dick looked up from a poorly constructed fly. The counselor walked over and without a word cut the material from the hook and turned to other matters. There had been too much talk and too little of motivation through interest in the life of this boy. In another forty-five minutes Dick had a second fly finished. The counselor also cut this one from the hook but commented. "That's better." Dick plunged back into the work. In thirty minutes he looked up with pride in his eyes and exclaimed "Come here!" The counselor went quickly and commended him with words that will sound in Dick's thoughts all of his life, "You have done it! You have made a fly that will fish!" Nothing more needed to be said. Too many fine emotional experiences are damaged by too many words.

By this time it was the lunch hour. Dick was back at his task as soon as possible after eating and all that afternoon made acceptable flies. The other fishermen gave him sincere praise, the first he had merited in this group for careful accomplishment.

This experience led to other victories during the camping summer. Also it gave opportunity for some re-education of the appreciative parents. With Dick really trying to do his school work, his teachers soon discovered that there was a basic fault in his reading habits, which must

Dodds Bunch

A summer camp arouses interest in varied activities which have character building value.

be corrected before he could become an educated person. So Dick, the boy who seemed so impossible, was guided step by step in his growth by church, school and home.

The story of Dick has been so told as to show how certain fundamental needs, which may come in the growth of youth, can be met by an interested, understanding group and a wise leader. This educational guidance may come from the home, the school, a character organization such as scouting, a social agency community center, or the church. If, as in Dick's case, the organization alert to the need is the church, the guidance goes beyond the basic emotional reeducation of character development alone and seeks to relate the person to the eternal values which center in the Divine Source of life and its high purposes.

With Dick, before the church could have a ready access to his life he had to be helped to enjoy work rightly done. Before that happened he took no serious part in the activities of his church group if any sustained effort were required on his part. But after the new status had been achieved, he soon became active and interested in the church school program and to share in its worship, study, service projects, and social plans. He had always been ready for a good time but only with someone else doing the preparatory work. Now a new Dick was soon entering into much of the work of his church group in a manner that added to his own Christian development. Being, of course, interested in parties, it was only natural that he should begin to use his newly developed abilities in crafts in preparing for social activities. As it should, this investment in time came to include also worship and serious study.

When Dick has reached a capable man's stature in community leadership it would not be strange if he should put a trout fly in a prominent place on his office desk.

The girls listen with interest to the recording they made. *Knudson*

Make your own recordings

A new teaching method shows promise

By Gary Bousman*

JANET walked slowly up to the microphone. The music was beginning to fade away and she knew that this was her cue to begin speaking. She hesitated. This was her first time before the "mike." She glanced back at her Sunday school teacher, who, with a nod of the head, reassured Janet that the "mike" would not bite.

Janet began to speak. "The seventh grade girls of the Plymouth Bible School present the 'Story of Joseph' . . . " As she continued with her introduction, other members of her class began to group themselves around the microphone.

Then followed a stirring drama of the struggle of Joseph to make his brother understand him. It told how he became prime minister of Egypt and how he kept his brothers in suspense when they came to Egypt. Finally, it told about his power to forgive and of his great faith.

On the following Sunday the seventh grade girls presented to their Sunday school superintendent a recording to be placed in the Sunday school's growing library of records. This recording was not perfect from a technical standpoint. In some instances words were not clear. At times the girls had not stood close enough to the "mike," and at other times they had hesitated too long between speeches. However, the girls knew that they had accomplished something and were anxious to start on another record. They had learned much about the Bible and they had learned to work together.

This project had begun two months prior to the time the recording was made. At that time the Sunday school superintendent had suggested to the teacher that records were needed for the Sunday school library. Since the girls of the seventh grade were studying the life of the Patriarchs, he asked if the girls would like to try their hand at writing a short radio play. The play would not be presented on the air but could be recorded and used by other classes when they study the life of the Patriarchs.

It did not take much effort to get the girls interested. Their enthusiasm grew from Sunday to Sunday, and attendance was markedly increased. First, they had to make a thorough study of the Patriarchs. They decided to give special attention to the life of Joseph. Then they had to decide what parts of the story should be included in their play.

After several weeks of study and planning, committees were formed to write the various parts of the play. Putting

* Associate Minister and Director of Young Peoples' Work, Plymouth Church, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

the parts together was not too easy. There was some disagreement, but through the patient leadership of the teacher, all was ironed out, and the first draft was written. Again, the Bible was thumbed in order to check on historical details.

Next, the manuscript was turned over to the associate minister for criticism and suggestions. Then followed two weeks of preparation for the microphone.

Arrangements were made with the head of the speech department of the Milwaukee-Downer College—located two blocks from the church—to have the recording made. The cost to the church was less than a dollar.

So within the space of two months the seventh grade girls had produced their own recording portraying the life of Joseph. As stated previously, the record was not perfect. In making future records technical flaws will have to be corrected. Many of these errors will be avoided through the counsel of speech teachers and persons connected with one of the local radio stations.

In spite of the various imperfections of the record, the project was well worth while. The members of the class know more about the Patriarchs, and they understand better how to look up references in the Bible. The solidarity of the class was stepped up and the class feels that it has done something worthwhile. Said one of the members of the class, "This makes Sunday school interesting."

The Beginning Teacher

But I had a plan!

By Anna Laura Gebhard*

This is the third part of a continued story designed to help prospective teachers or those who are just beginning to teach. The letter writer, having been persuaded to take a class of juniors, went to her first session unprepared, with disastrous results. A later teachers' meeting in which goals were discussed gave her the courage to continue. Mrs. Gebhard writes from first hand experience as a minister's wife in rural churches. Her book *Rural Parish* is coming off the press this month, being published by the Abingdon-Cokesbury Press.

Harold L. Phillips

"I planned today's lesson carefully. It was a good plan, but—"

DEAR SIS,

I'm still floundering. I felt as though I were on the road to teaching success till this morning's class session. It's amazing how seven children can humble the surest adult.

One lesson, however, I've learned very well this past month. That's a lesson of gratefulness for the Sunday school teachers who have guided Janice and Jerry through their happy Sunday school years.

I'm afraid I've rather been taking the church for granted. I've felt that my duty was done when I fed and dressed my children and sent them off to Sunday school with some degree of regularity. I've always expected good teachers, with well-prepared lessons and pleasant dispositions to be there to greet them. I've never appreciated the effort and sacrifice on the part of their teachers. Now I know. If the last month's experience has done nothing else it has shaken me awake.

But back to this morning's class session. I was prepared today. I had studied hard. And I needed to. I discovered when I opened the teacher's book, that all the lessons for this month and next are related. The eight lessons are a unit on Thanksgiving. I got so interested I scanned through all eight lessons, and I gained a new sense of direction and purpose. I guess it just isn't possible to study one Sunday's lesson at a time without losing the continuity and perspective a teacher needs. There were lots of interesting suggestions, things for the class to do. Most of them I didn't know how to do, or felt afraid to try with a group of children.

I wish I'd taken the time to study through the unit before we started it two weeks ago. Perhaps today's difficulty would never have arisen.

I planned today's lesson carefully. We've been reading the stories of Nehemiah rebuilding the wall at Jerusalem. In today's lesson, the wall was finished and Nehemiah called the people together to give thanks. The purpose of today's lesson—yes, that was there too—was to help the boys and girls understand why worship is important and helpful. I planned to have the class read together the story from the pupil's book, of Nehemiah's summons to the people. Then after we'd talked a little about worship, I was going to have them each work on the check lists in their books on why people worship. Then I took a church hymnal so we could look up an order of worship and talk about it. There was a hymn in the pupils' books too, one of my favorites. It is "All People That on Earth Do Dwell," and it's a paraphrase of Psalm 100. The class likes to use their Bibles; they seem to find their way around in the Bible better than I. So I planned to have them look up

* Methodist Parsonage, Litchfield, Minnesota.

the Psalm and compare it with the hymn. Then I'd hoped to have time for them to start memorizing the words of the hymn.

It was a good plan, wasn't it, Sis? I went to Sunday school with a buoyant step this morning, looking forward to the half hour of class session.

Then this is what happened. John and Dick came late, while I was taking roll. They were in the midst of a heated argument, and they did not lower their voices when they came into the church.

"That new kid thinks he's smart," John was saying. "He isn't going to be in our gang. He's a Jew, that's what he is."

"But, John, Sam's a better pitcher than you are," Dick answered hotly.

"He is not. We'll gang up on him if he starts pushing himself in."

The rest of the class pitched headlong into the discussion before I could ward it off.

"You're right, John," put in Arthur. "We're not having any Jews in our bunch. What's a gang for if it isn't to keep kids out that don't belong?"

Sis, I glanced at the neat lesson plan before me. "Purpose—to enrich the pupils' thoughts of worship." And all that animosity in our midst! Something wilted inside of me. And something else seemed to be saying, "This is the kind of problem religion ought to solve."

"Boys," I finally said, "when you come home from a wet, muddy walk what do you stop at the door to do?"

"If I didn't stop to wipe my feet," Arthur began, "my mother'd sure be mad."

"Well some of us need to pause before we come into God's house, too," I went on, "and clear the ugly thoughts out of our minds."

The boys were glum and silent now, and I didn't feel much like talking about Nehemiah and his thanksgiving of long ago.

"Tell me about your gang," I finally said. "What do you like to do together? Who is this new boy, Sam? Is he really a Jewish boy? Did you know that Moses, and David, and Joshua, and Jesus were Jews?"

That wasn't in the plan, Sis, but we talked the whole class period about the gangs over at school, about the Jewish family that just moved to town, about why some people disliked them, about other Jewish boys of long ago.

"Were the Jewish people long ago like the Jews we know today?" Alice asked just as the bell rang. That's the closest we got to the lesson. I didn't get to my plan at all. The hour just wasn't long enough.

I wondered afterwards if I had failed. But tolerance and understanding are on the path to worship, aren't they, Sis?

Lots of Love,
Your Beginner.

P.S. Do you suppose when we talk about the Hebrew thanksgiving festival of Sukkoth, that Sam, the new Jewish boy, would come and tell us how they celebrate it in his home? I think I'll suggest it in class next Sunday.

Training 500,000 new workers

The community leadership school can help in this tremendous task

By Lee J. Gable

MORE THAN A HALF MILLION new church workers every year! This figure is not an idle dream. It is reality. The Protestant churches of the United States and Canada require about two million volunteer workers. A few studies which have been made indicate that the average volunteer church worker holds a position from three to four years. If this is true, we need at least a half million new workers every year. If these workers are to understand their jobs and to have the skills needed to do those jobs well, we will need a comprehensive training program.

It is the purpose of this article not to indicate what that comprehensive training program should include but to lift up the possibilities of one important part of the program—the community leadership school. The community school cannot provide all the training that is needed. Both the local church schools and the denominational schools are needed to give training not otherwise available. We believe, however, that the interdenominational community training school is an important and a necessary part of our leadership education responsibility.

Why a community school?

1. *It demonstrates coöperation among the churches.* Enough has been said about divided Protestantism to make it unnecessary to labor the point here. It is significant, however, that in many communities the one real piece of interchurch cooperation is the community leadership school. Frequently the community school leads to other experiences in cooperation. In one town, for example, two people felt the need for a training school. They were instrumental in getting together most of the pastors and church school superintendents of the community. A school was planned. A council was organized to provide sponsorship and continuity for the school. The council in turn saw other needs and proceeded to meet them, its most recent activity being a weekday church school. It all started when a community leadership school demonstrated the possibility of interchurch cooperation.

2. *It enlists the best leadership of all denominations* in planning and conducting the school.

3. *It offers special courses* which no one church could offer alone. For example, we are told that the church school superintendent is the forgotten man in Christian education. A single church cannot offer a course for superintendents because it would have only a very few

people who ought to take that course. In most communities a denominational group would have too few. When all the churches work together, they can assemble a group of superintendents and potential superintendents large enough for a stimulating class.

4. *It includes the many churches that otherwise would have no training school opportunity.* Every community has churches too small to offer the training classes which its workers need. Every community has churches which are too far from others of its denominational fellowship to make it possible for them to set up a denominational school. When we see properly our community relationship, we see that each church is responsible for helping develop leadership for all the churches.

The place of the community school is being increasingly recognized across the country. In the year from September 1, 1945 to August 31, 1946, there were 590 community leadership schools which were accredited and held. As this is written figures are not complete for the period from September 1, 1946 to August 31, 1947. We are positive, however, that the total will be about 675. Though this is written in the very early days of the current year, we appear to be running ahead even of last year.

Glimpses into a few schools

One school works a year in advance on planning and promotion. In the closing session, a blank is distributed asking a number of questions involving evaluation of the school which is being completed and asking for suggestions for the next one. Courses are chosen and instructors enlisted early. Publicity is given through newspaper announcements, bulletins and news releases sent from the office of the church council, announcements in ministerial associations, conferences and other groups, and letters to age group workers.

Pre-registration has helped in many cases. One community had a school for a number of years and then allowed it to lapse. When an effort was made to revive the school, a dinner was held for interested people. At the close of the dinner seventy-five had registered. A registrar appointed for each church has frequently been valuable in securing a good enrollment.

A good demonstration is worth hours of lecturing. In one school the twenty minute assembly period was given each evening entirely to demonstrations. The demonstrations included different types of worship services, story telling, and some of the activities from the program of a wide awake youth group. In another school definite arrangements were made for all members of a class on children's work to visit age group departments on Sundays during the term of the school. A regular feature in one school is a workshop night during which activities for boys and girls at Christmas time are demonstrated.

People need a chance to become acquainted with good books. Many schools set up a book department for the sale of textbooks and other good books on religion and home life. One school provides a browsing period, taking special care that only the best is available.

Our Christian faith and life are being severely tested by issues that confront us in community, nation and world. We need to know what we think as Christians. Some schools provide for the facing of important current issues, arranging for an address and discussion opportunity in the schedule of the school.

Some things to remember in a community school

1. *Assign responsibility for leadership education to a representative and continuing group.* The group should represent each denomination (in a small community, each church) and include ministers as well as laymen.

2. *Begin planning early.* It is good to start after Easter for a fall school and in early fall for a winter or spring school. This planning should make adequate provision for curriculum, faculty, promotion and publicity, finance and location of the school.

3. *Set up a balanced curriculum.* It should include content and methods, general courses as well as specialized ones, something for the novice in Christian education, and something for the veteran worker.

4. *Be sure that your school is accredited* and at least measures up to the minimum requirements of the Standard Leadership Curriculum. For information write your state council. If you have no state council or do not know how to get in touch with it, write the Department of Leadership Education of the International Council of Religious Education, 203 North Wabash Avenue, Chicago 1, Illinois.

5. *Plan your promotion early.* See that each person in the community receives a listing of the courses from which to select what will best meet his needs.

6. *Relate the program of the school to actual church work.* This may be done by observation and demonstration as suggested earlier. Assignments should be as practical as possible, involving planning, practice and evaluation of church work.

7. *Make the most of assembly periods.* They should be related to the purpose which the school seeks to serve, should be thoroughly planned and held within a reasonable time limit.

8. *Introduce something new.* A plan that was good five years ago may be entirely stale this year. We should not strive for shallow novelty, but variety is good.

9. *Develop a long range plan.* This should include a definite schedule of dates and a curriculum covering from three to five years. Courses should be so selected that a worker makes definite progress and becomes eligible for a Certificate of Progress in the shortest possible time.

10. *Put more than a school* into your leadership education program. Workers need other types of training experience. It is well if the program can be planned by the one committee and all parts of it related. See "The Community Committee on Leadership Education" listed below.

Resources

1. *The Community Committee on Leadership Education,* 15 cents
2. *The Dean's Manual,* 25 cents
3. *The Standard Leadership Curriculum, Second Series Courses* (Bulletin 502)—20 cents
4. *The Standard Leadership Curriculum, First Series Courses* (Bulletin 501)—20 cents

These are a few of the resources available through the Department of Leadership Education of the International Council of Religious Education or through your state council or your denomination. The best resource of all, however, is a group of people in your community who know the needs and who will work together to develop the leaders which the churches in your community and every community must have.

We put many leaders to work

A leadership training program that solves both youth and adult problems

By Ernest Y. Yorger*

Three years ago two churches at Lafayette, Indiana, the First Christian and the Central Presbyterian, began an almost unprecedented experiment. They employed one man, the Rev. Ernest Y. Yorger, as Associate Minister in both churches. Under his leadership these churches set up a joint program of leadership training for adults and an expanded program of leadership training and interest group activities for the young people. There developed not only an unusual program for young people but a comprehensive training program which supplies leadership for all aspects of the educational program. Mr. Yorger here describes this plan. It could, of course, be followed in a single church as well as in churches with joint leadership.

ABOUT TWENTY PER CENT of the adults of any church hold official jobs in the church. The other eighty per cent express themselves mostly through attendance at the services and financial gifts; they seldom find really significant things to do within the church or church school. Of course every church school can use more good teachers, but many persons are not willing to undertake this difficult type of service. There must be a greater variety of service opportunities if more of this eighty per cent are ever to express their faith through the church.

The program in operation in our two churches, among other things, meets this need. For, in addition to the work of teachers, new jobs are found in the following interest group areas: arts and crafts, individual sports, folk recreation, junior choir, ceremonials, society programs, games and sports, socialized discussion, worship, organization through commissions, and special leadership training classes. For example, on Wednesday and Thursday evenings, long after the children and young people have ended their hours of activities in the crafts room, a number of interested men of the church will be found in the shop experimenting with new mediums for handcraft or new projects for the weeks ahead. Or they may perhaps be repairing athletic equipment for the use of the youth groups. Adults need these new experiences and are very happy when they find them in the church.

The program in our churches can best be presented from four viewpoints: its basic idea, the time schedule, the content of training, and the results.

The basic idea

Briefly, the basic idea at which we have arrived is this: you do not train leaders of youth merely by taking a group of adults off into a room in the church and talking about young people who are somewhere else: on the streets or doing their "home work." You have them share a variety of activities with young people, and at the same time have classes to enrich that shared experience. We have set up a varied and comprehensive program to carry out both aspects of this program.

The time schedule

Our program lines up on the following schedule, beginning with the start of the week. The activities are held separately in the two churches with the exception of the training classes, which are held jointly.

Sunday, 9:30 A.M., Sunday school.

11:00 A.M., During church service, an extended program of Christian education for those of nursery, beginner, primary and junior ages; the latter group has training in choir work.

Afternoon, 3:25—5:00, Leadership training for adults —an "overflow" class from the Tuesday evening program.

Evening, 5:30—9:00. Leadership training for high school young people.

Monday evening. For intermediate age—ceremonials, scout meetings, youth society.

Tuesday, 7:25—9:00 P.M. Adult leadership training program—courses of study.

Wednesday, afternoon (in one church); *Thursday* afternoon (in the other), after school until 5:00. Juniors engage in arts and crafts and hear special Bible stories.

Wednesday, evening (in one church); *Thursday* evening (in the other), 6:30—8:20. Intermediates engage in arts and crafts, individual sports, group games, discussion, special ceremonials and rituals.

Saturday mornings, various seasonal youth activities.

Content and procedure

On Tuesday evening and Sunday afternoon, adults come to the church for basic and comprehensive training. Twenty-one courses in all are presented over a period of three years, and students may take as much or as little of this work as they desire. However, a minimum of twelve units, six of which must be in the Biblical literature group, is necessary for the recognition certificate.

The complete schedule of the three-year cycle of courses is as follows: Bible, eight courses; doctrine, two courses; psychology and teaching, four courses; handicraft and arts, three courses; recreation, three courses; music and drama, one course.

The new lesson material is presented Tuesday evening. The Sunday afternoon session is for those who miss the Tuesday evening class or can come only on Sunday. On both days, the total period is divided into two sessions by a five-minute intermission. The courses presented in the fall of the year begin on the first Tuesday evening following the World Wide Communion Sunday and usually continue for ten weeks. The courses which are taught after the first

*Associate Minister, First Christian Church and Central Presbyterian Church, Lafayette, Indiana.

of the year begin about the middle of January and usually continue for seven weeks. Those taught after Easter are completed in four or five weeks. In the month of May a special School of Arts and Crafts is taught on Tuesday or Wednesday evenings for a special and limited number of students.

There is no registration fee for these courses, but all students must own a copy of *The Complete Bible: An American Translation* by Smith and Goodspeed. All mimeographed material and guide sheets are furnished to the students at cost. Those who participate in this program of adult education are expected to complete their assignments and do their reading from week to week.

High school young people receive their training on Sunday evenings. The curriculum covers a two-year period with courses as follows:

Study courses: Introduction to the Old Testament; Acts and the Early Church; What Happens When We Worship; Music in the Church; The Life of Christ; Revelation to II Peter; Recreation Materials and Methods; The History of Protestantism.

Arts and Crafts: Four mediums required out of 20 taught. *Individual sports:* two required out of six taught. *Folk Recreation:* songs, folk dances and singing games, square dances and reels. *Play party games:* mixers, active, quiet.

In addition to these courses in the curriculum, each young person in this leadership training program must serve on each of four commissions: Worship and Study, Stewardship, Fellowship, and Personnel. These young people must know also how to lead a discussion, conduct group worship, and must have at least six months' teaching experience in the interest group program of the churches. When they complete their formal education in the Sunday evening Leadership Training Group they receive a final recognition and are awarded the Celtic cross. Furthermore, those who complete this course and are still in high school become instructors for the beginners of this leadership training program, teaching classes in activities and also some of the Bible courses.

Results

Our chief result has been secured in the fellowship of work between young people and adults, and between young people and children. In the matter of interest group activities, such as arts and crafts, games, sports, ceremonials, and folk recreation, the high school young people, *when trained*, make really wonderful helpers. When the junior boys and girls come to the church on Wednesday or Thursday afternoons, the group in each church averages about forty in attendance. For this number the best possible balance of leadership has been three adult leaders plus five trained high school young people. The adult leaders keep the roll and oversee the work. The high school youth do most of the actual teaching. When adult leaders in the church are brought into close association with children and with the trained high school youth, the result is a very happy fellowship for all concerned.

Incidentally, it has been the experience of our sponsoring churches that the young people of high school age serve more readily and more skilfully than the young people of college age. Perhaps this is because they are less concerned about career and marriage. But, it is equally true that a small percentage of college age young people in such a group is a valuable addition and of real service to their church. Our experience has been that not more than ten per cent of this training group should be of college age. There is also a ten per cent rule with reference to children and young people from other churches in the community who are allowed to attend these groups.

One of the most valuable results to us has been in the attitudes of our adult leaders. Many Sunday school leaders find it hard to continue in their work because of the emotional strain that is often provoked by the feeling that they cannot do it well and that the job of working in a church school very often seems to go on forever. To meet these problems, the following policy has been adopted in both churches: All teachers and helpers and interest group leaders are appointed to serve a year at a time; Each Sunday school class has an associate teacher, whenever possible, who will be present every Sunday, teach at least two lessons every quarter, help with the social life of the class, and help the class members relate themselves to the entire program of the church; All teachers are urged to take training in the special adult training course and attend laboratory schools; All Sunday school teachers, special helpers and interest group leaders are interviewed by the minister or superintendent of the Sunday school early each fall to determine problems, needs, and desires for the coming calendar year, with the idea of giving each teacher and helper complete cooperation for the job that has been assigned; and All teachers are members of the church.

Not every church can carry out as extensive a program as is now being operated through the sponsorship of these two churches, but most churches can expand their program to include additional junior, intermediate, senior and young people's activities and can give training to both young people and adults in carrying on these expanded activities.

It is important to note at this point that these new forms of fellowship bring a new kind of recognition to the adults of the church. We often speak of the need that children and youth have for recognition, but adults are equally in need of encouragement. Many of the adults' jobs in the church are really thankless, and they often receive only criticism for their efforts. No church should let a year go by without having a well planned recognition and dedication service for all church school workers. Another means of recognition is an annual letter of appreciation from the minister of the church and from the superintendent of the Sunday school, letting each adult leader know how much his witness has meant to the total program of the church.

The best kind of recognition, however, comes to adults from the love, respect and friendship of the children and youth whom they serve. Moreover, a well organized program of adult and youth leadership training in connection with youth and children's activities offers more than recognition. It offers the kind of response-to-effort and a sense of achievement that makes life worth while. It offers a new and thrilling experience in the realm of the spiritual and the moral. Regardless of the type of activity, the main objectives are those of winning people to the way of Christ and of giving young people and adults the chance to grow morally and spiritually. And what a sense of spiritual security is experienced when adults and young people work together in a vital Christian program, and when they know that God is with them in their witness, to bless the work of their hands!

Worship Resorces

DECEMBER

THEME FOR DECEMBER: *Love Came Down at Christmas*

For the Leader

Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, love divine;
Love was born at Christmas;
Stars and angels gave the sign.

Love shall be our token,
Love be yours, and love be mine,
Love to God and all men,
Love for plea and gift and sign.
—CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI

Love and good will are what we all feel at Christmas. Children should be helped to catch this spirit of loving kindness during this joyful season. All too often, children are more concerned with getting than giving. They need to discover that people are happiest when they share with others. Perhaps our children should see more clearly why we have remembered Jesus for nearly two thousand years.

Let us as leaders prepare our hearts and minds to make this Christmas significant to our boys and girls, and may we, too, be filled with joy and love at this beautiful season.

Our songs this month are from *Hymns for Primary Worship*, the Westminster Press, Philadelphia Pa. Note materials to be ordered for December 21.

Primary Department

*By Olaf Hanson**

December 7

THEME: *What Does Christmas Mean?*

WORSHIP CENTER: A picture of Jesus showing his love for other people. It might show Jesus helping the sick. A picture of Jesus in the synagogue talking to the people would also be appropriate. If possible, have a small bell on the worship table, together with an open Bible and a red candle. Around the holder some evergreen might attractively be arranged.

QUIET MUSIC: "Church Bells"[1] by Miriam Drury or a record of some Christmas chime music might be played if obtainable.

A THOUGHT:

The lovely music we have just heard may have reminded us of church bells ringing throughout the world. At this time of the year we think of Christmas bells. The bells might be saying:

The bells are ringing out their cheer,
Peace, love, good will to all,
Both far and near.

Let us sing a Christmas carol that reminds us of the true meaning of this joyous season.

SONG: "Ring Out the Joyful News Again"[1]

CONVERSATION:

Christmas is a time when we remember Jesus. The very word Christmas uses part of Jesus' name—Christ. We do not remember Jesus' birthday because of the stories we hear about his birth. People have remembered Jesus because of something else. Can anyone guess? (Let the children respond. They might say because he was kind to others and showed what God is like.)

Maybe you can guess from the story I will tell you why Jesus has been remembered for many years. The story may also help us to discover the true meaning of Christmas.

STORY: (From Mark 3:1-6)

THE MAN WHOM JESUS HELPED

One day the leaders in the synagogue had asked Jesus to speak. It was the Sabbath Day. The room was crowded with people. Jesus saw a man whose hand was withered. The man could not use his hand. Jesus always felt sorry for those who were sick or crippled and knew that it was very hard for them to be happy.

The leaders in the synagogue had some laws or rules about what people could and could not do on the Sabbath day. One of these rules said that no one must work on the Sabbath. If you broke these rules you were doing wrong.

Now Jesus, when he saw this man who had the withered hand, felt such a kindness and concern for the man that he wanted to help him, so he caused the man's hand to be made well. The leaders in the synagogue and even the people in the audience began to whisper to each other. Jesus knew that they were saying that he had worked on the Sabbath day by helping this man and had broken one of the laws. Jesus knew they were very angry. He also knew that they cared more about rules than they did about helping people.

Who was right, the leaders or Jesus? Jesus cared so much about people that many felt he gave them a new idea of God, that God was like a loving Father. But others often misunderstood when he helped others.

May we sing a Christmas prayer together?

SONG: "While the Christmas Stars are Shining"[1]

OFFERING

OFFERING RESPONSE: "Lord I Want to Be a Christian"[1]

This may be sung by a group of children or by all the department. All three stanzas may be used, as they are most fitting.

CLOSING PRAYER: O God, we thank you for Jesus. We are glad to remember his birthday, not because he was a baby but because of his love for everyone. We thank you, God, as we begin to think about Christmas, that we too can be loving and friendly just as Jesus was. Help us to be more thoughtful and kindly not only during this happy season but every day of our lives. Amen.

QUIET MUSIC: The same music as used in the beginning of this service may conclude it.

December 14

THEME: *Preparing Ourselves for Christmas*

WORSHIP CENTER: Two pictures would be excellent for use in this service. The first might portray a family decorating a tree, or carrying a surprise gift to someone; the second picture placed beside the first one might show a family reading the two Christmas stories from the Bible. A few sprigs of holly placed near the open Bible will finish the worship center.

QUIET MUSIC: "While the Christmas Stars Are Shining"[1] (Play softly.)

CALL TO WORSHIP: Sing, "While the Christmas Stars Are Shining"[1]

A PRAYER

Father,
As we come to our quiet time
May we love all people everywhere.
May we be glad that we can happily
celebrate Jesus' birthday.
May we get ready for Christmas
By making others happy and thinking
many times about Jesus who lived
so long ago.
May we cheerfully help our parents
and show kindness in everything we do.
May we remember that other children in
many parts of the world will be
keeping Christmas with us. Let us
pray for them too. Amen.

CONVERSATION:

"What is the best way that we can get ready for Christmas? Maybe you have felt excitement already as you have gone shopping with mother. The windows are prettily decorated. People are laden with packages. At school you may have been singing the carols we all love."

Let the children talk over some of the ways that they can best prepare for Christmas. You as leader should guide them in their thinking so that they will not feel that getting gifts is the most important thing. Even small children can understand that many people spend more money than they can afford, which is not celebrating Christmas in the right way. Some of the following ways should be discussed with our boys and girls in celebrating Christmas and preparing for it.

1. Singing carols in their homes. Learning from what country the carol has come. Stories concerning the origin of the carols may be obtained from a public library.
2. Hearing the story of Jesus' birth read from the Bible. Perhaps father or mother could tell other stories that show Jesus' love for others.
3. Sharing time to visit friends who are sick or lonely.
4. Sharing a special offering of money with the church to help missionaries and teachers.
5. Decorating the tree together as a family. Let children create some of the pretty things to go on the tree.
6. Attending church as a family.

At the end of this conversation let the children sing "Away in the Manger" and "Silent Night."

OFFERING

OFFERING RESPONSE: "As the Wise Men Brought Their Treasures"[1]

SILENT PRAYER: Let us think how we can do some of the things in preparing for Christmas that we have talked about this morning. (Pause several seconds.) Let us say quietly to ourselves, "O God, help me to do the things that I have thought about. Amen."

SONG: "Lord I Want to Be a Christian"[1]

QUIET MUSIC: "Silent Night"[1]

*Teacher, Weekday Church Schools, Dayton, Ohio.

[1] *Hymns for Primary Worship*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, Pa.

December 21

THEME: *Christmas Means Loving and Giving*

WORSHIP CENTER:

The picture entitled "Follow Me" by Tom Curr. This may be obtained from your denominational book store or from Trinity House, 1784 Bryden Rd., Columbus, Ohio. A red or green candle may be used.

On one side of the table a small Christmas crèche may be placed. Some child may wish to lend his for the service of worship.

The leader should have the pamphlet "How It Feels to Be Hungry," obtainable from The American Friends Service Committee, 23rd and Arch Sts., Philadelphia 3, Pa. The cover picture of children holding their empty bowls would interest the children.

QUIET SINGING: "Away in the Manger."[1] Let the group sing this as they look at the worship center.

CALL TO WORSHIP: Luke 2:11-14

SONG: "While the Christmas Stars Are Shining"[1]

LEADER:

Jesus loved children when he was here upon the earth. I think he understood boys and girls and knew how they felt. This artist (of "Follow Me") has painted Jesus smiling. All over the world at this Christmas time there are little children who are sick because they lack proper food. (Show picture on pamphlet or any others of suffering children in other lands.) I would like to tell you a story about a family that helped by their loving kindness to bring peace and happiness to some children who did not live in America.

STORY:

AND ON EARTH PEACE

"Mother, see what we made in Sunday school today!" Between two fingers, Billy held up a Madonna which he had carved from soap.

"You must have been hearing the Christmas story today," said mother.

"Yes, we learned the Bible verse—let me think—oh, I've forgotten the first part but it ends 'Peace on earth toward men of good will.' Miss Smith asked us what we thought peace meant."

"What did the class think?" asked mother.

"Well, I remember Joan thought peace meant when everyone was nice to each other. Then Danny said, 'We don't have to worry now what peace means since America won the war.'"

"What did you say about it?" asked Billy's father, who had been reading.

"Well, I didn't say much, except to tell them about some pictures I saw in a magazine of children in Italy and how they looked so hungry. It said below the picture, 'This will be the hungriest year ever in Italy, and in other parts of the world too.' No one is happy when they are hungry!"

"Then you don't think we have peace yet in the world?" questioned his father.

"Seems queer how things are," replied Billy.

"America will have a happy Christmas—a peaceful one, too, I hope," said his mother.

"Yes," said Billy, "but what about the people in other countries? That verse said, 'Peace on earth;' it sounds as if it means all over the earth."

"It does indeed!" agreed his father. "And many people in the world won't have a very happy Christmas."

"Wish I could give them some of my Christmas dinner and presents," responded Billy.

"It wouldn't reach them in time now," said mother, "but at church the other day the women were telling how we could help these unhappy countries in Europe and Asia by sharing warm clothing, books, food, and seeds."

"I know," said Billy. "Let's take some of our Christmas money and help them. Wouldn't it be fun to help them all through the year?"

"Yes!" added father. "Let us do this, for that is one way to bring peace, love and good will on earth."

"Let's get started right away tomorrow," suggested Billy eagerly.

Just then his mother turned on the radio, and they heard, "We will close our Christmas Eve service with this poem about Christmas Peace:"

"Peace on earth," the bells had rung,
"Good will to men," the song was sung.
And still the thought rang in my mind,
Just where on earth can peace we find?
Perhaps where happy children play
Together in a friendly way,
Perhaps where families think of others
And show their love for one another.
In lands far distant o'er the sea,
Thousands are homeless, hungry though free.
This Christmas peace, they cannot share
Unless our gifts show them we care.

"Sounds like they had been listening to us," said Billy softly. While the chimes were ringing out "O Little Town of Bethlehem" the family was silent until the last note had been played.

"And peace to men on earth," whispered mother.

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DEP'T. I J

"My, I am glad we can help bring peace," answered Billy.

"So are we," said his father.

SONG: "Ring Out the Joyful News Again"

OFFERING

OFFERING PRAYER: "Our Gifts of Money"[1]

QUIET MUSIC: "Silent Night"[1]

December 28

THEME: *Christmas Lives On*

WORSHIP CENTER: A picture of a child sharing a surprise or doing some kind friendly act for a sick person. An open Bible placed on a dark attractive altar cloth, preferably a blue or wine color. Two lighted candles may complete the center.

QUIET MUSIC: "Church Bells,"[1] by Miriam Drury

CALL TO WORSHIP: "Christmas Lives On" (See music on this page)

Christmas lives on in all hearts and minds,
When people are loving and thoughtful and kind.

BIBLE READING: Matthew 25:35

STORY:

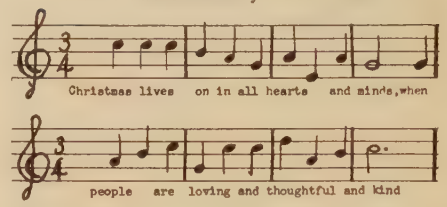
CHRISTMAS LIVES ON

Billy had gone back to school after the holidays with a feeling of sadness. His class had had so much fun in preparing for Christmas. What excitement and fun there had been! Things would be pretty tame now.

On entering the playground he met James and Harry. They decided to play tag. Running made them breathless and their cheeks were red from running. Suddenly Billy was again reminded of their Christmas preparation as he spied the Christmas tree with the last few strands of tinsel clinging to its branches. He smiled, remembering how he had helped trim it. He guessed he would tell Miss Moore that he wished Christmas would go no forever.

Christmas Lives On

Words and Music by Olaf Hanson



The bells summoned them to their rooms. Miss Moore was in a pretty, new plaid dress, a Christmas present thought Billy. He raised his hand. Miss Moore said, "Yes, Billy?"

"Miss Moore, I wish Christmas could go on forever. We had so much fun packing the shoes for children overseas.

"Yes," said Jean, "I liked making the sewing kits, best. Maybe we will hear from the ones who received them sometime!"

"Well, since you are all so interested in helping people who need so many things, perhaps we can share other things throughout the rest of the year. How would you like to outfit a boy and girl with nice new clothing? We can shop together in groups for the clothing. Would you like that?"

"Oh goody!" said Jean, "why, this is going to be like having Christmas all year long!"

MAKING PLANS WITH CHILDREN: Perhaps you might like to do something such as Billy and Jean were going to do. Would you like to? Make plans if the children seem interested.

OFFERING.

OFFERING PRAYER: "Dear Father, for Thy Gifts to Me"[1]

QUIET MUSIC: "Cradle Song,"[1] Johannes Brahms

Junior Department

*By Elouise B. Rivinius**

THEME FOR DECEMBER: *Christmas Joy*

For the Leader

In our worship services this month let us help the juniors discover the spiritual values of the Christmas season through the medium of music, pictures, stories, scripture and poetry. Give them the opportunity to share something of the Christmas spirit of love and good will with those who need our help. May this be a special time in which to develop new appreciations, and to discover the joys of planning for others rather than merely anticipating new treasures for themselves. Make your worship centers as lovely as possible and the entire room one that will inspire joyful worship each Sunday of the Christmas season. Make a real effort to secure the suggested phonograph recordings of "The Messiah" (Columbia Master Works set No. MM666). Note suggestions for dramatization in program for December 21.

December 7

THEME: "*Joy to the world*"

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP:

(Show picture of Isaiah from detail of "The Frieze of the Prophets" by Sargent, obtainable from the Boston Public Library.)

Do you remember the story of Isaiah, the young man who went to church and found that when he truly worshiped, God spoke to him and gave him a message to give to his people? Isaiah became the greatest of the Hebrew prophets and spent the rest of his life being a spokesman for God. He told the people of their sins and the mistakes they were making. He warned them of the troubles that would come to them if they did not change their ways. But in all the sorrows that would come upon them, there was one bright hope for the people "that walked in darkness." Will you take your Bibles and read with me a few verses from the words of the great prophet Isaiah? Let us turn to the ninth chapter of the book of Isaiah and read the second verse. (Use revised version.)

Now let us read the sixth verse of the same chapter. Are not these beautiful words? To whom do you think they refer?

When a great musician (Handel) wanted to tell the story of Jesus, he chose these verses to set to music as part of his oratorio "The Messiah." While we are listening to the record let us forget that we are here and imagine that we are in a great cathedral where a choir of a hundred voices is singing of the coming of the king.

PRELUDE: Records, side 11 (Isaiah 9:2) and side 12 (Isaiah 9:6); or solo. (See "For the Leader" above.)

CALL TO WORSHIP:

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth: . . . rejoice and sing praise.

Sing unto the Lord with . . . the voice of a psalm."

"Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein.

Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together

Before the Lord; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity." (Selections from Psalm 98:4-9)

LEADER: These same joyous thoughts have been put into a beautiful Christmas hymn that is known and loved wherever the story of Jesus is told.

HYMN: "Joy to the World"

LEADER:

It was more than seven hundred years before Jesus came when Isaiah spoke of the child who was to be born, but through all the centuries of trouble for the Hebrew people they always remembered that it was promised that some day the Messiah or "Anointed One" would come and save them from their enemies. Little boys in the synagogue schools would eagerly follow the rabbi's pointer as he read the words from the sacred scrolls.

Children growing up in the little town of Bethlehem would thrill to the words of another great prophet, Micah, who lived at the same time as Isaiah. (Read Micah 5:2a.) They looked at each other and wondered how such a great king could ever come from their humble little town. Bethlehem mothers clasped their babies in their arms and each one hoped that it might be her baby who was to be called by the beautiful name Immanuel, which means "God with us."

There was a hymn that tells us of this time of waiting. The first part of the music is sad as it tells of the time when the Hebrew people were held captive by their enemies. The last two lines are joyful and happy as they call on the people to rejoice because the Son of God will soon come to them.

HYMN OR SOLO: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (Have sung as a solo if completely unfamiliar to the juniors.)

PRAYER: Our Father, we thank thee for the joys of the Christmas time. We praise thee for all thy gifts of love which thou hast given us. Most of all we thank thee for Jesus, the Prince of Peace, our Saviour and Lord, Amen.

PRAYER RESPONSE: (sung) "Fairest Lord Jesus")

Beautiful Saviour;
Lord of the nations;
Son of God and Son of man.
Glory and honor,
Praise, adoration,
Now and evermore be thine.

OFFERING SERVICE:

Leader: "Not what we give, but what we share,— For the gift without the giver is bare."[1]

Response: (sung) "All That We Have Is Thine"

Prayer: Our Father, we thank thee for Christmas with all its many joys. We thank thee that Jesus came, and we would try to show our happiness by bringing joy into the lives of others. Help us to find many ways to add to the joy of Christmas time in our homes, at school and wherever we are by sharing what we have with those who are in need. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

CLOSING WORDS: As we leave this place of worship may the joy of the Christmas season dwell in our hearts and show itself in our lives today, and every day. Amen.

*San Marino, California.

[1] From "The Vision of Sir Launfal" published in "The Complete Poetical Works of James Russell Lowell"; used by permission of Houghton, Mifflin & Company.

December 14

THEME: "*Let every heart prepare Him room*"

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP:

MAKE LEVEL A HIGHWAY

Far away in a little city in Malaya there was great excitement. The leaders of the city called a special meeting. The schools had special assemblies, and in the streets the people were all talking about the coming visit of the Prince. The Prince of Wales, the future emperor of the great British empire, was on a world tour and was actually going to spend a day in their city. There was so much to do to get ready! Streets must be decorated, plans made for his entertainment and provision made for his protection.

As they began to work they realized that the road over which the Prince must pass was in very bad repair. It had deep ruts in it and wound about in a way that wasted time if one were in a hurry. No one had thought much about the road until they realized how it would look to the eyes of the Prince, who would see it for the first time and judge the city by its road.

They decided that it must be repaired at once. There were no great tractors to dig up the road and straighten it out, and no rock crushers to break up the stones into small bits to lay in the road. It all had to be done by hand, and hundreds of men worked long hours digging and leveling the old road. Then they brought large rocks and laid them in the roadbed. Next, smaller rocks were placed in the chinks between the big ones and pounded down. Finally they broke up rocks into the tiniest pieces and packed them in hard so that a fine smooth road was finally built, over which the Prince rode into the city.

The prophet who wrote the last part of the book of Isaiah must have been thinking of some such scene as he called upon the people to prepare for the coming of the Prince of Peace. Let us turn to the prophecy of Isaiah and read together Isaiah 40:3-11. This morning we are going to listen to another part of the great oratorio "The Messiah." Listen to the way the composer has set these words to magnificent music. Perhaps you will think of some way in which you can prepare your heart for the Christmas season. Perhaps there is someone whose Christmas will be much happier because you have remembered to do some kind or thoughtful act.

PRELUDE: Records, side 2 (Isaiah 40:1, 2a, 3); or solo (Isaiah 40:3); or solo "Voice in the Wilderness" (John P. Scott) (See "For the Leader " above.)

CALL TO WORSHIP: "O come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the Lord our maker."

RESPONSE: (sung to refrain of *Adeste Fideles)*

O come and let us worship,
O come and let us worship,
O come and let us worship
Christ the Lord.

LIBBIE W. ASHCROFT[2]

HYMN: "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

LEADER:

We do not need to build new roads in order to prepare for Christ's coming, but Christmas will mean much more to us if we "let every heart prepare him room" by clearing away all the selfish thoughts from our hearts and minds. Let us think of others and how we can make them happy instead of making long lists of the gifts we want for ourselves. We shall have a happier Christmas time if we are truly sorry for the things we have done that we know are wrong, and ask God to forgive us for Jesus' sake.

Some churches often use a very old prayer in which the people pray together for pure hearts in order that they may love God more perfectly. Shall we pray this prayer together this morning?

PRAYER: (read very slowly, phrase by phrase, letting children repeat or "echo" each phrase as spoken)

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER RESPONSE: (sung) ("O Little Town of Bethlehem")

O holy child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emanuel.

OFFERING SERVICE (same as previously given)

CLOSING WORDS: May the words of our mouths and the thoughts of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, today, and every day. Amen.

December 21

THEME: "*The Lord is come*"

TO THE LEADER:

This program may be used very simply with story and solos (or let the group sing,

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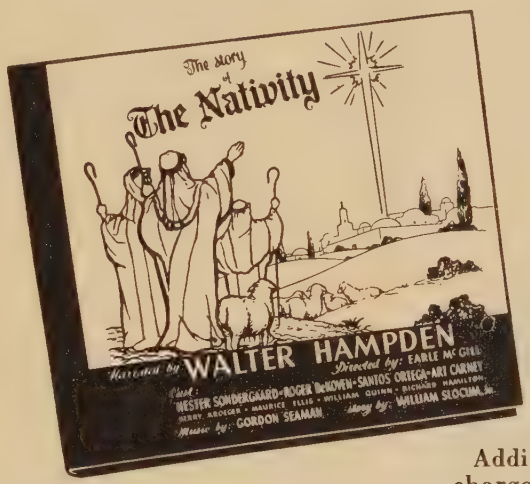
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if you wish), or it may be easily adapted into three simple scenes with very little rehearsal, as suggested in the story. One class could prepare the choric speech selections and be seated together at one side of the room. Another class or the junior choir could prepare the musical numbers and be seated on the other side. Both groups could wear simple white surplices.

PRELUDE: "Silent Night! Holy Night!" (choir could hum melody as it is played)

CALL TO WORSHIP: (by verse speaking choir)

Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, Love Divine;
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and angels gave the sign.
(From hymn by Christina G. Rossetti)

RESPONSE: "O come and let us worship. . . ."
(as used in previous service)

HYMN: "O come, All Ye Faithful"

STORY:

WHAT'S CHRISTMAS FOR?

James was sulking. He *did* want that new bicycle so badly. He was sure that Dad had said, "Not this year, Jim," just to be mean. All the fellows were getting new bikes this Christmas, and if he had to go on riding that old wreck of his,—well, he just couldn't stand it, that was all. He just couldn't stand it. Oh, yes, he knew that Dad's business hadn't been so good lately, but surely he could manage some way. He just didn't want him to have a new bike.

Big tears rolled down Jim's cheeks as he lay in bed in the darkness of his room feeling very sorry for himself. "What's Christmas for anyway," he muttered, "if a guy can't have what he wants most?"

As Jim looked out of his bedroom window the moonlight shining through the old walnut tree outside made strange shadows dance before his eyes. Gradually the shadows began to take shape, as though on a motion picture screen, and Jim found himself staring into a pitifully bare room *(Open curtain for pantomime)* where a weary mother was trying to quiet a crying baby. Two other children were huddled together under a thin blanket on a cot in one corner of the room. At the sound of a knock on the door the mother looked up and called, "Come in."

As the door opened Jim could see, under her little blue bonnet, the sweet face of a Salvation Army lassie. With a smile she put the big basket which she carried on the table in the middle of the room. The children's eyes grew big with delight as she took from the basket bread, milk, fruit, fresh vegetables and some meat—all the things needed for a good dinner for a hungry family. From a box there appeared a nice new outfit for each of the children. Soon the whole family was gathered about the table, warmly dressed and enjoying the first good meal they had had in a long time.

As Jim watched them he remembered the words of a song he had often heard in church. *(Curtain closes as choir sings verses 1, 2 and 4 of "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life.")*

As the picture faded out Jim found himself feeling a little ashamed as he remembered the

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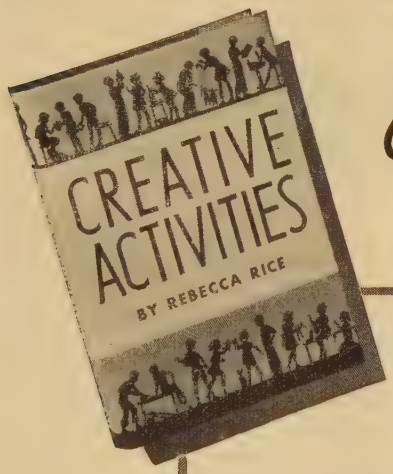

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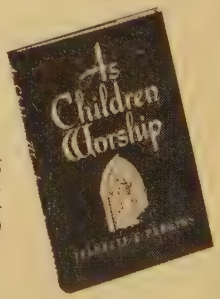

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good dinner he had eaten that night, and from somewhere he seemed to hear voices softly saying, *(verse speaking choir)*

Christmas is a *giving* time,
A giving time, a giving time,
Yes, Christmas *is* a giving time,
A giving time *indeed.*[3]

Again the shadows of the old walnut tree seemed to be taking shape and Jim found himself looking at another scene, one that seemed strangely familiar. *(Open curtain for pantomime.)* Of course, it was his own family when he was little. Mother and Dad were trimming the Christmas tree. He had been allowed to stay up and help for the first time.

That was the year when he had found out about Santa Claus. He knew now that was the reason why he had been permitted to help trim the tree and why Daddy had bought him a bright red Santa Claus suit. He had been Santa that Christmas and passed out all the gifts. What fun it had been, even nicer than telling a make-believe Santa in the toy store about the things he wanted. He watched his family finish the tree and turn out all the lights except those on the glowing tree itself. Then Mother and Daddy sat down on the davenport before the fireplace and with Jim cuddled between them they sang Christmas carols until way past his bedtime. *(Choir sings first verse of "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear.")*

As he watched he again seemed to hear voices softly whispering, *(verse speaking choir)*

Christmas is a *loving* time,
A loving time, a loving time,
Yes, Christmas *is* a loving time,
A loving time *indeed.*[3]

Then Daddy reached over and picked up the big family Bible from the table near by. He read again the story of that first Christmas night—of the shepherds and of the sheep quietly sleeping on the hillside, of the beautiful star that shone over the little town of Bethlehem so long ago. *(Curtain closes as verse speaking choir recites Luke 2:9-16.)* "And, lo, the angel of the Lord . . . And they came with haste, and found *(Open curtain for pantomime of Christmas scene)* Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger." *(Choir then sings first verse of "O Little Town of Bethlehem.")*

Jim watched the scene in wonder, and once more he heard the voices: *(verse speaking choir)*

Christmas is a *holy* time,
A holy time, a holy time,
Yes, Christmas *is* a holy time,
A holy time *indeed.*[3]

(Choir sings last verse of "O Little Town of Bethlehem.")

(Final curtain.)

As the picture faded from his sight, Jim felt ashamed that he had so nearly forgotten the true meaning of Christmas. As he lay quietly in his bed thinking what he could do to help make Christmas a giving, loving, holy time, he found that he had almost forgotten about the bike that had seemed so important only a little while ago. How much he had to be thankful for! How happy he was!

He was wide awake now but it seemed that he could still hear the voices: *(verse speaking choir)*

Christmas is a joyous time,
A joyous time, a joyous time,
Yes Christmas *is* a joyous time,
A joyous time *indeed.*[3]

HYMN: "Joy to the World! the Lord is Come"

PRAYER: Our Father, we thank thee that Jesus came to earth so long ago to bring joy, love, peace and good will to those who follow his good way of life. Help us to love thee more, and to serve thee better this coming year than ever before. In the name of Jesus who taught us when we pray to say, (the Lord's prayer).

OFFERING SERVICE (same as previously given)

CLOSING WORDS: As we leave this place of worship may something of the joy, love, peace and holiness of that first Christmas night abide in our hearts and show itself in our lives today, and every day. Amen.

[3] By Kenneth F. White; used by permission.

December 28

THEME: *"Let earth receive her King"*

TO THE LEADER:

Use this session to evaluate the Christmas experiences of your boys and girls. Clear up any misconceptions they may have as to the sequence of events in the Christmas stories, such as the arrival at the manger of the wise men and the shepherds. Study and compare two of the great madonna pictures, The Madonna of the Chair and the Sistine Madonna. Help the children discover that the first expresses personal possessive mother love while in the other the child is being presented to the world as its saviour and king.

PRELUDE: Recording of the "Hallelujah Chorus" or hymn "We Three Kings of Orient Are"

CALL TO WORSHIP AND RESPONSE (as in session 2)

HYMN: "There's a Song in the Air"

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 2:1-12 (Smith-Goodspeed translation)

HYMN: "Silent Night! Holy Night!"

STORY: "The Other Wise Man" by Henry Van Dyke. (A good condensation of this story may be found in *Junior Worship Materials* by Nellie V. Burgess.)

PRAYER:

Our Father, we pray that everywhere more people will "find the King" and choose to follow him and his way of love and service. Bless all thy servants wherever they may be who are serving thee and telling the story of Jesus and his love in the far corners of the earth. We pray for those without enough clothing to keep them warm and for those without shelter to protect them from the winter storms. Show us how we can help. Amen.

PRAYER RESPONSE (as in session 1)

OFFERING SERVICE (same as previously given)

HYMN: "We Would Bring Our Treasures"

CLOSING WORDS: As we leave this place of worship may the joy of serving the King of Kings become a part of our lives today, and every day. Amen.

Intermediate Department

*By Doris C. Kinsley**

THEME FOR DECEMBER: *God's Gift to the World*

For the Leader

During December you will want to give intermediates a new appreciation of what Jesus' coming means to the world and of the way in which he makes life more abundant for both individuals and society. Use freely materials that will aid in that purpose, as well as drawing ideas from the boys and girls as they plan.

The book by Maus, *Christ and the Fine Arts,* published by Harpers, is referred to twice in these programs, and will often be referred to during the year. If it is not available, the church school should provide a copy. It is an invaluable resource book.

December 7

THEME: *God So Loved the World*

WORSHIP CENTER: Against a draped background, use Holman Hunt's picture, "The Light of the World," (Jesus knocking at the door, with the lighted lantern.) If that is not available, and you have some other picture of Jesus at the door, substitute that.

PRELUDE: Piano plays "God of the Earth, the Sky, the Sea." When all are gathered and quiet, a choir or solo voice sings the first stanza, or as many as are desired.

CALL TO WORSHIP: Into a darkened, suffering world Jesus came, bearing through his life a light to guide the stumbling feet of men and nations. Listen to his words: "I am the light of the world. He who follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

HYMN: "Light of the World, We Hail Thee"

SCRIPTURE: John 3:16-21

MEDITATION: "God So Loved"

God, when he created man, put into his heart an upward reach, a desire to be like his Maker and to act according to that likeness. Through the centuries, after attempts to reveal his love toward the people he had created and for whom he had cherished such high hopes, God could see how poorly he was understood. He had been described as a God of vengeance and harsh judgment, one fierce in war and quick to condemn, mighty in his wrath, though merciful when he chose.

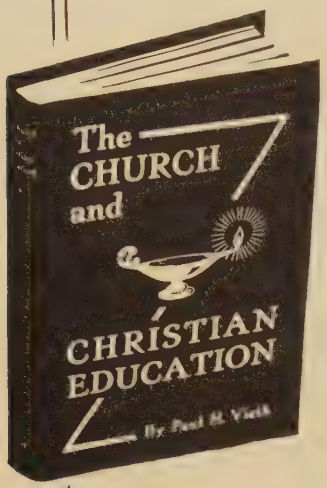
If that was what people thought of Him (if they bothered to think about him at all), it was little wonder that they didn't live in love and harmony. How could he best give men a new interpretation of what he was like? Yes, that's it! He'd come to earth in the flesh. If his Son could live out as a human being among ordinary people the truth that God is love, that he seeks to be a compassionate Father, that love, not hate, is strong,—perhaps they'd understand and change their way of life accordingly.

God loved the world so much that he *gave* his Son, even to the point of suffering and death, that men might know a better way to live, and that whoever would have faith in him might not die but live abundantly and eternally.

Even yet we do not fully appreciate what the great and supreme gift means. Perhaps we've never thought what the world would be like if Jesus had never lived in his extraordinary way, if he hadn't shown God's love in a way that could be understood. This is the month when life everywhere takes on gaiety and festivity, when people catch for a little while the spirit of good will. Perhaps we're going to have to think a little more of what his birth and life meant if this

* Youth Worker, Vermont Congregational Conference, Montpelier, Vermont.

For Your Careful Study



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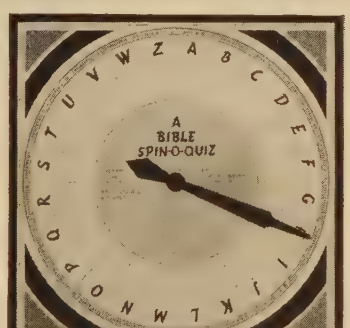

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Christmas is to be anything more than tinsel and temporary good will.

HYMN: "We Would See Jesus," stanzas 1 and 2. (The other stanzas will be used in a succeeding service.)

PRAYER:

O tender and loving Father, who could not be content with staying apart from us but lived among us in the personality of Jesus, we would keep open minds and receptive hearts that we may see him in a new way. This Christmas season may then mean for us not just the birth of Jesus in a manger two thousand years ago, but shall become a re-birth in our hearts, in the way we treat each other, and in the way the nations plan for peace.

We know that nothing we can do is good or great enough to be worthy of thy great gift, and we are thankful that that gift is free to all, unworthy as we may be. Our gifts to thee are small, but now we bring our offering, with a desire to give our lives and all we are and possess to thy service.

OFFERING: Piano could play, "We Would See Jesus"

BENEDICTION: May the light of Jesus our Lord and the love of God, our Father, go with us now to lead us through the week.

December 14

THEME: *God Seeks to Enter Men's Hearts*

WORSHIP CENTER: The same picture as last week, Holman Hunt's "The Light of the World," or Jesus standing at the door.

PRELUDE: An instrument. Some young person who plays a violin or horn could play Christmas carols.

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me." (Revelation 3:20)

HYMN: "As with Gladness Men of Old"

STORY AND SCRIPTURE: "At the Door"

A favorite picture of Jesus is for many artists that of his standing at a door, representing the door of the heart, as he knocks to gain entrance. His words are familiar: (Read John 10:9-17.) Here the leader should give an interpretation of the Hunt picture as given in *Christ and the Fine Arts*, page 621, or *Pictures from the Upper Room*, or Bailey's *The Gospel in Art*. It should include something of the artistry, the meaning of the lighted lantern, the crown, the brambles and vines, the bats.)

One artist was asked why he had no latch on the door in his picture of Jesus at the door. "There is good reason," replied the artist. "The latch is on the inside, waiting to be lifted as the owner chooses to answer his knock and let him enter."

God yearns more than we can ever know to guide us and answer our problems. If he didn't, he would never have given Jesus to the world. But he is helpless without our cooperation, for he cannot force himself upon us. If we do not make room in our lives, he cannot dwell there. He sees how poorly we live. He knows how much more happily and usefully we might live. He longs to be permitted to live in and through us. Can he? The answer lies with us.

SILENCE: Prayerful thought, then a solo voice sings the first stanza of "O Jesus, Thou Art Standing."

HYMN: "O Jesus, Thou Art Standing," stanzas 2 and 3

OFFERING: As piano continues to play the above hymn.

BENEDICTION: May the God who seeks us for his children enter our hearts and go with us always.

December 21

THEME: *Joy to the World, the Lord is Come*

WORSHIP CENTER: A setting appropriate for Christmas, such as a crèche, a manger, a star.

TO THE LEADER:

Your church will doubtless have prepared a special dramatic service for this Christmas Sunday. A Christmas pageant, prepared by S. F. Welty, appeared in the September issue of *The International Journal*. The following is to serve merely as a guide if you wish a simple, brief service of worship apart from the more elaborate presentations of the season.

PRELUDE: The music should be joyous, triumphant. Victrola recordings of Christmas carols would be appropriate.

DRAMATIZATION: "The Story that Goes with Christmas"

Hymn: "Joy to the World," by all

(A poorly dressed small boy, dirty and rough appearing, comes down the aisle.)

Boy: What's all this joy about? Who's happy? My old man's drunk, the food's gone, and Mom is sick. And you singing about joy to the world!

Intermediate (from audience): Don't you know? This is Christmas. That means joy and singing. Everybody feels good at Christmas.

Boy: Oh yeah? You, maybe, with your good clothes and happy homes. *(As he approaches the crèche)* Say, what's this? Hay, cows, sheep [*whatever is in the worship center*] in chuch? I have never been inside a church before, but I heard your music, and the door was open, and I walked in. But I didn't expect to find this.

Intermediate (from audience): Don't you know the Christmas story?

Boy: Sure—Santa Claus. But there ain't none.

Intermediate: No, I mean the story of the Christ Child.

Boy: Christ Child? I've heard his name. Pop says it sometimes. But I didn't know there was a story that went with him.

Intermediate: Here's the story. *(As he or she opens to the Christmas story)* Would you like to hear it? *(Reads in a modern translation, Luke 2:1-20. The boy listens, spellbound with interest.)*

(At the end of the story, music is again heard from the victrola, telling in music the story that was read. The child is rapt in the wonder of it all, takes off his cap that he has up to now worn, and stands, quiet and somewhat reverent, before the worship center, while the audience all sings the closing hymn, a carol. Then the worshippers leave as the recorded music plays again.)

STORY: As an alternate to the dramatization above, the following story may be told:

THE REAL CHRISTMAS

As Patience Smith came home from the dame's school one cold winter afternoon, she could hardly keep her feet from dancing or her legs from running. To do either would have been very bad indeed. No Puritan girl would ever, ever dance, and no lady, not even a young one, would think of running—not out on the village street—not on the way home from school!

When Patience got home, she had to remember not to shout. That was forbidden too. But it did not take her long to remove her wraps, put them away carefully, and go into the big kitchen-living room, where her grandmother and mother were sitting by the fireplace.

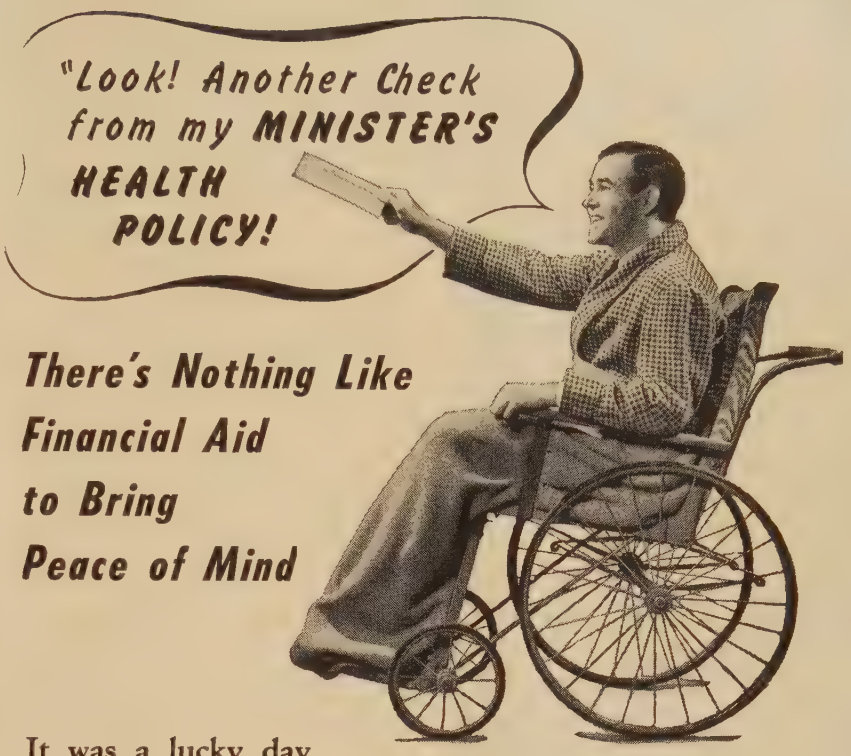
She greeted them and then said excitedly: "Grandmother! Today is Christmas! I remembered it when we had to write the date on our lesson at school. It is December 25, 1681!"

"So it is," said grandmother. "So it is. Ah, me! How could I ever forget Christmas! When I was a child I thought of nothing else for weeks before."

"Tell me about Christmas," begged Patience, "About the way it was at your father's house over in England—the games and feasts and music."

"Patience, be quiet," said her mother sternly, and then said to grandmother, who was her husband's mother, "Now Mistress Smith, don't go filling the girl's head with those tales of the wicked things people used to do, and then say it was to honor the Christ."

"Some of the things were wicked, no doubt," admitted grandmother, "but they



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were no more wicked than to slight the Christ-child and refuse to notice his birthday, as if he were someone we cared nothing about."

"But we don't know this was his birthday," objected mother. "Not really. The Bible does not say, and this day was selected by the Church—because it fitted a pagan holiday. Should we celebrate the Saviour's birth on a pagan holiday with heathenish customs?"

This was too strong an argument for grandmother. "You are right, my daughter," she said. "Our Lord should be worshipped with soberness and reverence and not with loud noises and much eating and drinking. But for all that, the story of his birth should not be forgotten."

"But we dare not give it special notice, even if we wanted to," mother reminded her. "It is against the law to stop work for a holiday or to have a feast or any kind of festival today. It has long been the law in Massachusetts."

"It is not against the law to read the Bible," responded grandmother. "Patience, bring me the Bible."

The Smiths were the proud possessors of a whole printed Bible, and this Patience went to get, lifting it down from the shelf where it was kept wrapped in cloth. It was so heavy she almost dropped it, but she managed to put it on a little table in front of grandmother.

Grandmother unwrapped the Bible and turned the big leaves. Patience sat nearby and listened to every word. "I'll pretend it was really this day," she said to herself, "this very day long, long ago."

Then, while Patience listened and mother listened too, although her fingers kept busy with her knitting, grandmother read aloud the Christmas story. She first read from Luke: "The angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a City of Galilee, named Nazareth." With these words Patience forgot where she was and imagined herself in Nazareth, listening with wonder to the message the shining angel gave to the lovely girl Mary. She followed Mary and Joseph on their weary trip to Bethlehem and their search for a room. She could see the dark stable they finally found and, in the manger, a tiny new Baby. Then, out in the fields, she was frightened with the shepherds when the angels' voices came and she heard the joyful announcement, "For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." Back to the village she hurried with them and knelt in adoration before the Child.

Grandmother's voice stopped while she turned the big leaves of the Bible to Matthew, and then she began reading again. Once more Patience was in a far country, in the company of Wise Men wearing strange, rich clothing and riding camels. They stopped in Jerusalem to inquire about the King whose star they had seen in the East. She shivered when she heard Herod urge them to return and tell him where the Child lay, so that he too might worship him. Following the star, they came to Bethlehem and, finding the little family, they entered into their home. And there these wealthy Wise Men offered the little Baby of poor parents rich gifts—gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. Patience sighed with relief when the dream came to the Wise Men, telling them to go home another way and not to tell Herod what they had found.

Grandmother stopped reading and folded her hands on the Book. Patience came slowly back from the far country, where her mind had carried her, to the big kitchen with the broad fireplace. She sat quietly while her mother and grandmother watched her glowing face with loving eyes. At last she spoke.

"Grandmother," she said, "those stories you have told me, about the big dinners and the presents and all the singing and eating and laughing—that must have been fun. But the real way to have Christmas is to remember these stories about Jesus and what it meant to have him come. That's the real Christmas, isn't it?"

"Yes," said grandmother, smiling at her. "Yes, that's the Christmas that cannot be lost or forgotten. That is the real Christmas."

LILLIAN WILLIAMS[1]

December 28

THEME: *If Jesus Had Not Come*

WORSHIP CENTER: A picture of Jesus, and above or below it a neatly printed placard reading "IF I HAD NOT COME?" (Large enough to be very conspicuous and readable.)

CALL TO WORSHIP: John 3:16, 17

HYMN: Some hymn about Jesus, such as "O Master Workman of the Race," "O Son of Man," or "My Master Was So Very Poor."

STORY: "If He Had Not Come." Page 606 in "Christ and the Fine Arts."

In case you do not find the story, get the group to imagine what difference it would make if Jesus had never lived, if men had never caught his new conception of God. Mention churches, schools, hospitals, charity organizations, literature, culture, the lives of great men whose inspiration was from him, the Christmas season, Easter. Make it as vivid as possible, then point out that unless we see and know him and live his Spirit, the new year will be no different from others, that good resolutions are of little value unless all of life is motivated by his love and good will.

AN EXPRESSION OF THANKSGIVING for Jesus and his coming:

Leader: Now let us be thankful that Jesus did come and that the world is the richer for his coming. Let some of you say why you are thankful for his coming.

(Some should be prepared ahead of time, ready to express a sentence or two which they have thought out themselves, with your help in wording it if need be. After several have spoken, others may do so spontaneously. Then you will close, leading them into the giving of their offering, something like this:)

For Jesus' matchless life among men which taught us that we too could live more as he did, we thank thee, our Father. For thy great love which yearns after us, we are grateful. Give us the desire to accept thy gifts and his way of life. Amen.

There are many places to which Jesus has not yet come because people have not heard about him. Let us show our thankfulness for his coming by giving some of our money that his message may go further around the world.

OFFERING: Music of "Joy to the World"

HYMN: "We Would See Jesus," all stanzas

BENEDICTION

[1] Westminster Departmental Graded Materials. Used by permission of author.

Senior and Young People's Departments

*By Eugene S. Ogrodowski**

THEME FOR DECEMBER: *Born to Save the World*

December 7

THEME: *A World to Save*

PRELUDE: Hymn, "O Come, O Come, Emanuel"

CALL TO WORSHIP:

O come, Desire of nations, bind
All peoples in one heart and mind;
Bid envy, strife, and quarrels cease;
Fill the whole world with heaven's peace.[1]

HYMN: "Watchman, Tell Us of the Night"

SCRIPTURE: Micah 5: 1-4

PRAYER

Good Christian men, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice!
Now ye hear of endless bliss:
Joy! Joy! Jesus Christ was born
for this.
He hath oped the heavenly door,
And man is blessed for evermore,
Christ was born for this,
Christ was born for this!

Good Christian men, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice!
Now ye need not fear the grave:
Peace! Peace! Jesus Christ was
born to save.
Calls you one, and calls you all,
To gain His everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save,
Christ was born to save.[2]

MEDITATION:

Personal problems, world perplexities and international difficulties are not new.

When the prophet Malachi spoke of a coming ruler who was to save Israel, he did so because there was no hope for the world of his day unless a Messiah came as an answer to a perplexed world.

In spite of man's advances in learning and science, mankind has not succeeded in bringing peace, prosperity, and a perfect morality. Today, also, the world needs a Savior.

Now, the world does not look for a Messiah—a Savior. Rather, the world is endeavoring to find ways of teaching and living the way of Christ, confident that Christ's teachings can save our world from destruction.

Christ was born to save a world. In spite of troubles and serious problems the world continues to make advances in morals, ethics, and every day conduct as more individuals accept and follow Jesus' teachings.

Let us pray:

Grant us, O God, the wisdom of those who see thy coming into our world through Christ

* Editor Youth Publications, Disciples of Christ, Christian Board of Publication, St. Louis, Missouri.

[1] From "O Come, O Come, Emanuel" familiar Latin Christmas carol.

[2] Mediaeval Latin Carol, translated by John M. Neale.

the Savior, as well as the insight of those who sense thy presence through the growing of knowledge and social advance. And grant thou unto us the supreme wisdom of knowing that we must have both these two pathways of thyself to our hearts and our world. Amen.

HYMN: "My Dear Redeemer and My Lord"

BENEDICTION: Give us faith that right and truth come of thee, O God, and are unconquerable. In the name of him who came to establish righteousness and justice we pray. Amen.

December 14

THEME: *God Reveals His Love*

PRELUDE: "God So Loved the World"

CALL TO WORSHIP:

God of love and God of glory,
Unto thee we lift our praise
For the blessed Christmas story—
A Savior given in ancient days.

HYMN: "Light of the World, We Hail Thee"

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION:

"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (R.S.V.)

HYMN: "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" (first verse)

"This is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed." (R.S.V.)

HYMN: "As with Gladness Men of Old" (first verse)

POEM:

CHRISTMAS JOURNEY

Some have not travelled far, nor may;
To a great company
There is no promise of a day
When they may cross the sea,
And trace the way the wise men trod
To little Bethlehem;
But Christmas, by the grace of God,
Brings that dear place to them.

In distant town and humble shed
Where Sorrow's shadow lies,
Or Sickness rests its aching head,
Or Need lifts troubled eyes,
The manger stands again, and He
Whose name is Hope, draws near,
Assuring life and liberty,
And God's accepted year.

With shepherd worshippers we share
The gladness of their song.
The wise men with their gifts are there,
And a vast nameless throng.
The Christmas meditation past,
Our grateful hearts with them
Have had their wish fulfilled at last,
And been to Bethlehem.

—CLARENCE E. FLYNN[3]

LITANY OF GRATITUDE AND DEDICATION

(Copies should be available for all young people. Otherwise, two young people may alternate in the reading of the Litany.)

Leader: For the majestic sweep of a limitless universe of starry heavens and our world of marvelous gifts—

All: *Loving Father, we thank thee.*

Leader: For the penetrating light of thy divine truths that illumine our way—

All: *Loving father, we thank thee.*

Leader: For thy love expressed in the gift of thy Son to a wayward and neglected humanity—

All: *Loving father, we thank thee.*

Leader: To the cause revealed in Jesus Christ, the Savior of mankind—

All: *We dedicate our talents and powers, O God.*

Leader: In vision of success in our individual lives as we strive to live worthily of thy perfect gifts—

All: *We dedicate our talents and powers, O God.*

BENEDICTION: O Father God, may the spirit of the Prince of Peace cleanse our hearts and elevate our judgments and guide our feet into the ways of peace both personal and universal. Amen.[4]

December 21

THEME: *Born to Serve*

PRELUDE: A medley of Christmas hymns.

CALL TO WORSHIP:

"Behold, this child is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel; and for a sign which is spoken against; yea, and a sword shall pierce through thine own soul; that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed." (Luke 2:34, 35)

HYMN: "Joy to the World" or "Hark the Herald Angels Sing"

SCRIPTURE: Luke 22:24-27

MEDITATION:

The Christmas story, with humble shepherds bowing in adoration and wise men bringing gifts to the new-born king, almost obscures for a moment the real purpose of Jesus. The tribute, praise and adoration given him at his birth were justified.

As Jesus matured into manhood, he discovered more and more followers who were willing to praise him and bow before him. But the Master was not content to have men bow and scrape before him. He was concerned about their devotion; was it deep enough? would it mean that consecrated youths and devoted adults would follow and serve as true Christians?

Himself, Jesus tried to establish as a servant—servant of all. Our admiration is magnified at the thought of the Master's spirit. He was the servant of all—a healing hand for the leper, a word of comfort to the bereaved, a blessing upon little children; healing once a youthful son and in another instance a young girl—all a service to poor or rich, to wise or simple.

Apart from the serving ministry of Christ we can hardly glory in the Christmas story; which is God's gift to man in flesh and blood that dwelt among men and served and saved a needy humanity.

HYMN: "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

POEM: "Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning"

Say, shall we yield Him, in costly devotion,
Odors of Edom and offerings divine,
Gems of the mountain, and pearls of the ocean,
Myrrh from the forest, and gold from the mine?

Vainly we offer each ample oblation;
Vainly with gifts would His favor secure:
Richer by far is the heart's adoration;
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

—REGINALD HEBER

BENEDICTION: Now may Christ's spirit guide us to follow in His steps and live only the life of Christian service. Amen.

[3] From *Fellowship*, fall 1946. Copyright Christian Board of Publication. Used by permission.

[4] A. H. Wilson in *Hearthstone*. Copyright Christian Board of Publication. Used by permission.

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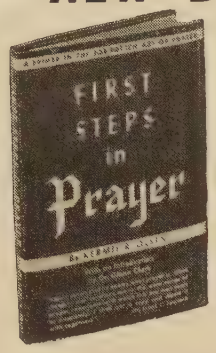

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December 28

THEME: *The Lure of a New Day*

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife,
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

—ALFRED TENNYSON

HYMN: "Another Year is Dawning," by Frances R. Havergal

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 100

POEM:

WASTED DAYS

God gave to me a task to do,
And now, I pause at setting sun,
And see the day pass in review
And know that task has not been done.
And well may my heart bow in dismay
For this has been a wasted day.

It's not so much that I have failed
Nor that a single day is lost—
That might not be so much bewailed
If only that was all the cost.
But, friend, I've learned through bitter tears
That wasted days make wasted years.

—LOUISE E. THAYER[3]

MEDITATION:

Today has yet only a few brief hours, and the year a few days. Will they be spent on the same old selfish interests that claim our best energies? Will we dare to turn over a new leaf in the book of life that too frequently is filled with nothing but the confused scribbling of undirected youth? Dare we stop awhile and consider what is happening to our lives?

Leader: Let us pray for new vision.

Silent Meditation

Leader: Let us pray for a sense of direction that our daily activities will have purpose and be in harmony with God's will.

Silent Meditation

Leader: Let us be grateful for God's provident care and the successes of the year that is about to end.

Silent Meditation

Leader: Let us pray for new revelation of a new year—that each day will lure us into new adventures with Christ as our trusty guide and inspiration.

Silent Meditation

Leader: Hear our humble prayers, O Lord, our help in ages past, and our hope in the year to come. Amen.

HYMN: "O God, Our Help in Ages Past"

BENEDICTION:

EVER MOVING TIME

Time that we have let slip past,
Not well applied, has but been cast
Aside, a credit, wasted, lost,
And only itemized as cost.

For unlike some commodities,
Its units measure by degrees,
Or seconds, each alike, concise,
While application lists the price.

We cannot buy time back again.
Each unit lost is gone, for when
A man puts forth his worst or best,
Remaining numbered are the rest.

—VIVIAN N. WHITE[3]

New Books

Christian Education Through the Church

By Frank M. McKibben. Nashville, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947. 158 p. $0.75.

What is the first thought that comes into your mind when you see the word "Christian education"? Traditionally we have thought of the Sunday school immediately. Probably the majority of American Protestants still think of the Sunday school and Christian education as synonyms. Leaders in Christian education, however, have gone far beyond this limited view. The time has certainly come when we need to find ways of leading the thinking of the whole church to a broader understanding of Christian education.

Dr. McKibben has phrased it well when he says that Christian education is "the total program of the church carried forward as an educational enterprise." He says that the task of Christian teaching is that of "creating and maintaining conditions that promote individual and group growth." We cannot be satisfied, therefore, until we have seen to it that the total church experience of people old and young is such that changes are actually taking place in their lives as a result of their participation in the church.

Dr. McKibben lists eight purposes of the church. 1. To interpret religion, 2. To provide worship and training in the devotional life, 3. To promote and enrich the fellowship of Christians, 4. To extend that fellowship to include an ever increasing number of people, 5. To provide incentive, training and opportunity for individuals to participate in efforts to improve society, 6. To aid individuals, 7. To enlist and train workers for the local church community and world, 8. To maintain a wholesome and effective institutional life. The entire church needs to accept these purposes. In undertaking to meet these purposes the total program of the church becomes an educational enterprise.

Dr. McKibben is not trying to have some organized form of Christian education "take over" the church. He sees Christian education as providing methods and procedure through which the total purpose of the church can be achieved. He goes on through the book to make numerous workable suggestions to this end. There is a chapter on "Organizing for Christian Education" which gives large place to the local church Board of Education. This is a good chapter in a field about which too little has been written. There is a chapter on worship in the church which deserves careful thought. What kind of worship experience should be provided for each age group? At what age should children begin to "attend church"? The book raises such questions but does not attempt to give authoritative answers. As a matter of fact the answers must be given locally because many variable factors are involved. The value of family worship and the fellowship of all ages in a worship experience seems not to be treated adequately at this point though it is recognized later in the book (page 126).

There is a good chapter on "Developing Christian Leaders." In addition to a listing of techniques and procedures to be followed, there is a good brief statement on the place of leadership in the church. One penetrating observation is made. "Whenever it is found difficult or impossible to man the program, such a situation is in part a reflection upon the spiritual life of the church." Most of our churches need a long and prayerful consideration of this sentence.

"Christian Education Through the Church" is not easy reading, but it challenges responsible workers to a very fruitful study. For the sake of keeping the book fairly short and in the lower price bracket, illustrative material has been largely left out. If you are a pastor, director of Christian education, church school superintendent, member of a church board of education or official board, or if you are a church worker who can see beyond your immediate job to the program of the whole church, you will want to read this book, find your own illustrations, and find ways of making your church an educational enterprise.

L. J. C.

How the Church Grows

By Roy A. Burkhart. New York, Harper and Brothers, 1947. 210 p. $2.00.

The dynamic pastor of the great and rapidly growing First Community Church of Columbus, Ohio, here reveals some of that church's sources of strength and success. This is not a story or description of that church. Rather, it presents what the author calls "The True Church," a spiritual reality which rises far above the many blundering ecclesiastical institutions which Protestant denominationalism has spread across America.

The True Church is the "growing fellowship of the *way*," opening to its communicants the "secret spring" of worship and the inner devotional life. The "holy resources" which it uses are human fellowship, the Bible, arts, philosophy, beauty, social and community agencies and the knowledge available through psychology and psychotherapy.

Illustrations of the effective work of the True Church, showing that it can actually be achieved, are drawn from a number of churches, some of which are in regular denominational connection. To qualify, however, a church must be fully aware of its primary relationship and responsibility to its community as a whole. It must be much more than a denominational outpost.

Such a church requires practical, life-centered preaching which takes psychological and sociological factors as definitely into account as theological concerns. This in turn calls for a different emphasis in the training of its leadership than the seminaries are providing.

The True Church calls for a new strategy to replace our obsolete denominational system. Neighboring churches must cooperate in facing their shared community task, providing a team of specialized leaders, and subordinating ecclesiastical institutionalism to community needs and welfare.

The author probably underestimates the values of the smaller church, with its single versatile minister and intimate fellowship, in favor of the great church, like his own, with a large specialized staff. It is truer to his own principles not to identify the True Church with any structural pattern, but rather to recognize it coming into spiritual reality under the most diverse patterns.

Here is a summons to ecclesiastical penitence and a delineation of the more excellent way.

H. C. M.

Laymen Speaking

Edited by Wallace G. Speers. New York 17, Association Press, 1947. 207 p. $2.00.

Twenty-five laymen write about the necessity of a religious faith and about the workability of the Christian religion in personal and group life.

The book is divided into five sections. I. The Personal and Social Needs for Religion, II. The Laymen in His Personal Life, III. The Laymen and His Church, IV. The Laymen in His Business Life, V. The Laymen at Work in the World.

The articles are necessarily short and general. They are varied, however, and are liberally sprinkled with personal experiences and illustrations. The mark of sincerity is on practically every page.

We cannot begin to indicate the nature of each chapter. There is much repeated emphasis however at two points. One writer after another testifies from his own experience that Christianity works in personal life, in business and community relations and in the wider circles of world affairs. One writer after another says that the church is not demanding enough of laymen. The writers make these statements, not critically but with the desire that laymen may share more vitally in the work of the church.

The laymen chosen represent many professions and vocations. They include cultural and business vocations, management and labor. They are not, however, a cross section of Protestant laymen. Each of them is a man who has succeeded at his own job. Pastors, council officers, leaders of community organization will do well to read this book for the sake of insight into the laymen with whom they work.

L. J. C.

The Layman Looks at the Minister

By Murray H. Leiffer. Nashville, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947. 160 p. $1.50.

The widespread interest in the cultivation of lay leaders makes this book very valuable. Ministers who are afraid to discover what lay men and women think should not read it. This treatment of an important subject is a fine blend of (1) an opinion poll of thousands of lay men and women and (2) an able evaluation of these observations by an astute churchman and teacher.

This is not merely what a professor thinks church men and women think about their

minister, but, as a result of investigation, it is what he knows they think. The book is made up of the results of actual investigations rather than the projection of one person's ideas into the minds of a lot of people based perhaps on a very inadequate basis of judgment. If this volume could stimulate ministers to make a similar type of investigation regularly as a basis for the operation of church activities, it would be more than worthy of publication.

T. T. S.

All About the Sunday School

By David J. Fant and Addie Marie French. New York, Christian Publications, Inc., 1947. 192 p. $1.75.

"All About the Sunday School" deals with a wide range of subjects of interest to Sunday school workers. The book begins with four chapters that are largely historical. The first deals with the Sunday school movement and the second with the Sunday school curriculum. These are brief but they are good historical statements bringing together information which most church school workers do not have.

The balance of the book is given over to brief chapters (17 of them) dealing with practical suggestions on Sunday school work. Many of these suggestions are helpful. There are numerous points, however, where the alert worker will raise question. To select just a few, the authors assume that the Sunday school is separate from the church (see page 69). They recommend circular tables for the junior and intermediate departments (see page 66). They assume that contests

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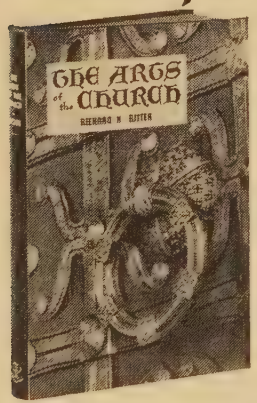

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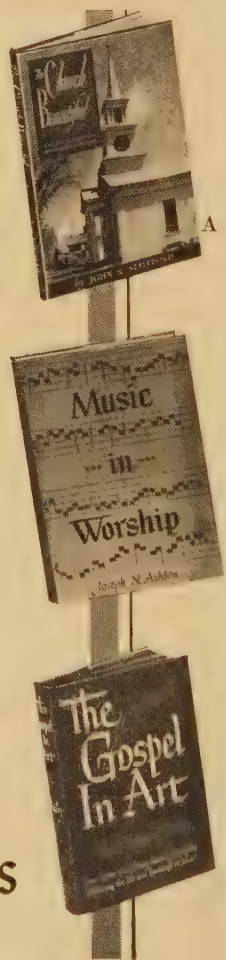

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are a primary means of increasing attendance (see pages 78 and 171).

Workers will find many practical suggestions in this book but it is hoped that they will check these suggestions against the judgment of recognized leaders in the various fields with which this book deals.

L. J. C.

A Christmas Anthology of Poetry and Painting

Edited and Compiled by Vivian Campbell. New York, 22, The Woman's Press, 1947. 95. p. $3.00.

This beautiful book is designed for individual reading and appreciation. The very finest works of painters and sculptors—from the art critics' point of view—are here united with poems which not only strikingly parallel these pictures of the Christmas scene but are also of very high literary quality. The works of art come very largely from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century, and the poems from the sixteenth to the nineteenth. There is a strong flavor of mediaevalism about the book, since even the more modern poets, Francis Thompson, William Blake, and Gerard Manley Hopkins, write with an antique accent. Both pictures and poems are largely unfamiliar to the average reader. The book would be an ideal gift for a person with cultivated taste in literature and art.

L. W.

This Love of Ours

By Leslie R. Smith. Nashville 2, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947. 100 p. $1.00.

This attractive volume is designed as a gift from the pastor to couples whom he marries. It is a simple, chatty preview of many of the factors and experiences which may make or mar their married happiness. Typical of the twenty-four admonitions are: "Express your gratitude," "continue courting," "accept your in-laws," "master money," "sanctify sex," "settle quarrels," "respect

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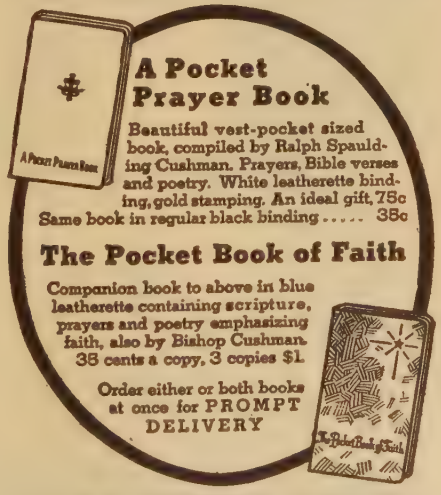

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Schweitzer's life has been exciting and richly varied. His story is certainly worth the telling and Mr. Hagedorn has told it with vividness and sympathy. His book is based partly on Schweitzer's own autobiography, but this was written in 1929. To cover the period since that time Albert Schweitzer recently sent Mr. Hagedorn a 47-page letter, and this, together with much research, form the data for *Prophet in the Wilderness.* $3.00

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privacy," "recognize the divine," and "grow old gracefully."

The brief chapters are adorned with bits of verse. There is illustrative case material. The treatment is simple, largely hortatory and certainly avoids controversial ground. If the tone seems a bit sentimental at times, we remember that the prospective readers are newly-weds.

H. C. M.

Preach the Word

By Roy L. Smith. New York, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947. 128 p. $1.00.

A popular story-form introduction to the Bible. The historical backgrounds and situations out of which the various major literary portions of the Bible emerged are vividly sketched. The emphasis throughout is on the large contribution made to our sacred literature by the scholars or learned men.

Christ in the Drama

By Fred Eastman. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1947. 174 p. $2.50.

This is a lively and consistently interesting study of the influence of Christ on the drama of England and America. The historical chapters, while covering well known material, are presented ingeniously to hold attention and contain many incisive and stimulating judgments on the drama of past generations. The analyses of recent plays by leading dramatists are fresh and instructive, although one

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may not always agree with Professor Eastman's evaluations. The section on current drama in the churches of England and America is realistic and enlightening. The author himself, of course, has made a very notable contribution to the improvement of drama as presented in churches.

This small book is well worth reading, not only by those who have a special interest in religious drama, but by all who would be aware of the indestructible power of drama to interpret life and the issues of life.

Additional Books Received

*Cooperation in General Education. A Final Report of the Executive Committee of the Cooperative Study in General Education. Washington, American Council on Education, 1947. 240 p. $3.00.

General Education in the Humanities. By Harold B. Dunkel. Washington, American Council on Education, 1947. 321 p. $3.50. A book dealing with the teaching of the humanities in colleges as a result of a five-year study.

A History of the Jews. By Solomon Grayzel. Philadelphia, The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1947. 835 p. $3.50. Much prejudice against the Jews, as other prejudices, rests upon ignorance of the facts. This book will be a wholesome antidote for such diseased opinions wherever it is read. While written to inform and enhearten Jews, it has a message for the rest of us.

Hosea: God's Love for Israel. By Charles Lee Feinberg. New York 23, American Board of Missions to the Jews, Inc., 1947. 123 p. $1.00.

In Such a Night as This. By Oswald W. S. McCall. New York, Harper and Brothers, 1947. 203 p. $2.00. A series of stimulating devotional meditations in the poetic prose for which the author has long been noted. They dig beneath the surface.

A Man Can Live. By Bernard Iddings Bell. New York, Harper and Brothers, 1947. 128 p. $1.50.

Seeds of Redemption. By Bernard E. Meland. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1947. 162 p. $2.50. In the first of the two books above Dr. Bell analyzes our world and calls people back to the basic faith and experience of Christianity, as well as to its ethical demands for our day. In the second Dr. Meland makes his own analysis and issues a call also for an adequate religious faith. The contrast between the conclusions of the two makes an intellectual, and a spiritual, exercise of profound interest.

*Physicians of the Soul. By Charles F. Kemp. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1947. 314 p. $2.75.

* To be reviewed.

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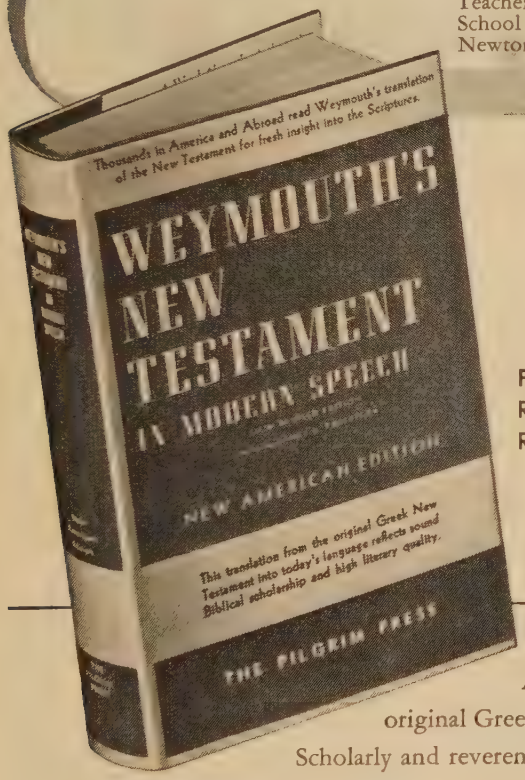
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What's Happening

New Denominational Children's Workers

ELGIN, Ill. Miss DESSIE MILLER has recently taken up her work as Director of Children's Work for the Church of the Brethren. Miss RUTH SHRIVER, who formerly held this position, is now Director of Women's Work, Home and Family Life of the same Board. Miss Miller comes from Bridgewater, Virginia, where she taught elementary education at the Bridgewater College, and served as regional children's worker for the Church of the Brethren.

NEW YORK, N. Y. Miss MILDRED F. ALMSTEAD has been appointed Secretary of the Department of Children's Work for the Board of Education, Reformed Church in America. Miss Almstead was a graduate of the class of 1944 of Central College at Pella, New York, and did graduate work at Iowa University. At present she is taking courses in New York Biblical Seminary in addition to her office work. She has taught school and has been active in local church work.

BOSTON, Mass. Miss JANET NEWTON, formerly editor of *Child Life*, has come to the Division of Christian Education, Congregational Christian Churches, as the new editor of *Children's Religion*.

Virginia Council Gets Assistant Supervisor

BRIDGEWATER, Va. The Virginia Council of Churches announces the appointment of MISS EVELYN LANGFORD, Pulaski, Virginia, as Assistant Supervisor of Weekday Religious Education. This appointment was authorized at the Annual Meeting of the Council in January, 1947, and Miss Langford entered upon her work on September first.

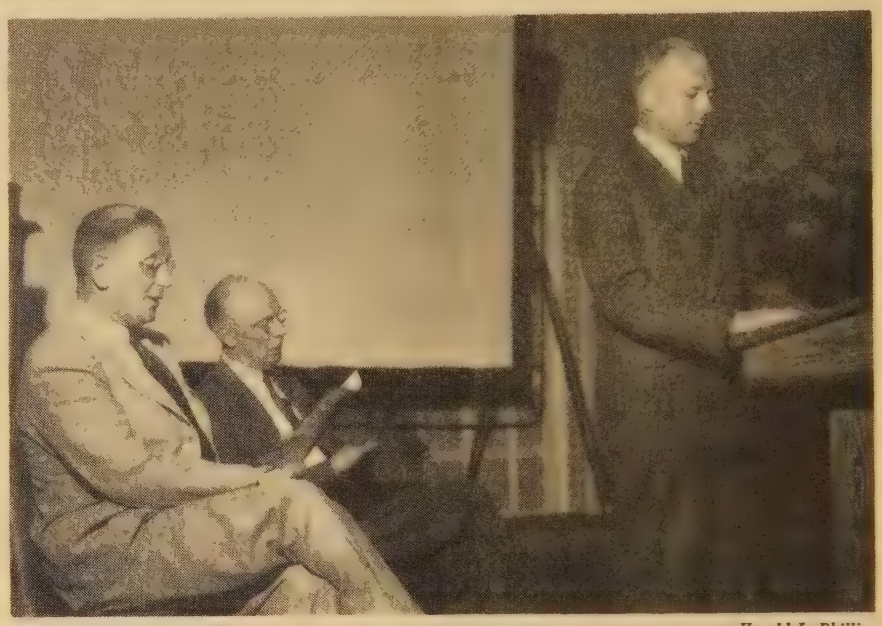
Miss Langford studied religious education at the Gordon College of Theology in Boston. She pursued graduate training in the field of religion at New York University, from which institution she holds the degree of Master of Arts. Her home is at Portland, Maine, and she has taught in Virginia Weekday Church Schools since 1936. Miss Langford will give particular attention to assisting and supervising teachers in Southwest Virginia but she will be available for service in other parts of the state as need and occasion may arise.

Do You Have Your Copy?

The folder, "How Can the I.C.R.E. Help Me?" is an attractive, easy-to-read description of the work and services of the International Council. It is a convenient piece of material to put into the hands of boards of education and others who should be acquainted with the Council. Copies will be sent free for the asking.

When you request this pamphlet, let us know if you would like your name to be put on the *Publication Service List* to receive regular announcements of Council publications. Address Miss Marjorie Tolman, 203 N. Wabash Ave., Chicago 1, Illinois.

Visual Education Workshop Undertakes New Ventures



Harold L. Phillips

Dr. Luther Wesley Smith, Dr. Harry Thomas Stock, and Mr. Paul F. Heard, at the dedication of the motion picture, "Beyond Our Own."

GREEN LAKE, Wis. Protestants are advancing rapidly in the use of radio and visual aids in their task of Christian teaching. This was demonstrated at the Fourth International Workshop in Audio-Visual Education, which was held here at the Northern Baptist Assembly September 1-6, in three ways:

1. The fact that Protestants are beginning to develop cooperatively motion pictures of theatrical quality was dramatically presented.
2. Educational executives, editors, and writers met in a five day seminar on film planning and production.
3. Radio was incorporated into this interdenominational workshop for the first time.

The first movie produced by 13 denominations through the Protestant Film Commission was given its preview here after being completed just in time to be flown from a Hollywood laboratory for the last evening meeting. An evangelism film called "Beyond Our Own," it was dedicated for Christian service. Dr. Luther Wesley Smith, Dr. Harry Thomas Stock, Rev. S. Franklin Mack, Paul F. Heard, executive secretary of the Commission, Dr. Gerald E. Knoff, and Rev. William Rogers participated in the dedication.

Participants were urged to help make arrangements in their cities for the world premier on Nov. 10 when the film will be shown in 100 cities, including London, Melbourne, Manila, and the prominent cities of the United States and Canada. The film, a 16 mm. sound movie, will be available to churches through denominational boards, local film libraries, and the Religious Film Association after Nov. 10.

This preview of "Beyond Our Own" was only one aspect of the opportunity that delegates had to preview and hear not only all the latest religious films but also about 350 church and educational films, sets of slides, filmstrips, and records. In groups ranging from two and three to above 300, these audio-visual materials were seen and heard more than 550 times in the six days.

The second significant feature of the workshop was that some thirty educators of seventeen denominations worked on production outlines of ten proposed films for use in Christian teaching. The films will be produced by P.F.C. after the outlines have been approved by the International Council of Religious Education according to procedures yet to be established. The proposed films include such areas as the Bible, character development, vocational guidance, Christian citizenship, churchmanship, and family life.

Seven other seminars were held in audio and visual aids, and seven interest groups met daily.

Also new in workshop history was the emphasis on radio. Dr. I. Keith Tyler, director of the Institute for Education by Radio and professor in the School of Education, Ohio State University, was a resource leader

and assembly speaker. He criticized the church for not using radio effectively and called upon Protestantism to take this medium of mass communication seriously.

Other speakers and resource leaders included Floyde E. Brooker, chief of the Visual Education Section, U. S. Office of Education, and Prof. L. C. Larson, director of the Audio-Visual Center, Indiana University.

Sponsored by the International Council, the Workshop had 272 registered participants of 32 denominations from 37 states, three Canadian provinces, and Puerto Rico, 35 staff members, 23 exhibitors, and more than 75 guests.

Visual Education Progress in India

MORADABAD, U. P., India. Under the progressive leadership of the National Christian Council's Committee on Audio Visual Aids, significant developments are taking place in India. The first major effort was to hold an Audio-Visual Institute in Landour, Mussoorie, the great hill station where missionaries from all denominations gather for their vacation. This was in May 1946 and the 82 delegates achieved the following results: (1) It was decided to continue the annual Audio-Visual Institutes; (2) the Landour Camera Club, with Dr. Donald F. Ebright as president, was organized; (3) an official audio-visual bulletin, *Camera Clip*, was authorized; and (4) a series of institutes were scheduled on the plains in order to take these newer methods and materials in to the schools and institutions.

This year, May 1947, the second Audio-Visual Institute brought 102 delegates from forty denominations. The program was headed by Rev. H. R. Ferger, American Presbyterian Mission, Fatehgarh, whose recent 16 mm movie in Kodachrome with sound track, "Heart of India," has had a great showing at home. Not only were there lectures and demonstrations but material was projected by 8 mm, 16 mm silent, 16 mm sound, 35 mm silent, projectors and an epidiascope. The stress was upon the use of equipment and materials now available in India.

This winter, 1947-48, there will be institutes in Lahore, Delhi and Calcutta, riots permitting. Production of filmstrips will be started this coming year and Indian produced religious subjects will be available. Rev. H. R. Ferger, in cooperation with the Leonard Theological College, Jubbupore, is now filming in 16 mm Kodachrome "The Good Samaritan," the first of a series of the Parables of Jesus.

DONALD F. EBRIGHT

Robert Kincheloe Goes to South Bend

SOUTH BEND, Ind. REV. ROBERT L. KINCHELOE has begun his work as the new Executive Secretary of the Council of United Churches of St. Joseph County, with headquarters in South Bend. The REV. C. B. CROXALL had served for the past nine months as acting secretary until a new leader could be found. Mr. Kincheloe has recently been Minister of Activities at the First Congregational Church in Chicago. He was formerly Chaplain for Defense Housing Areas of the Council of Churches and Religious Education of Maryland-Delaware.

"The Greatest Story" Needs Church Support

CHICAGO, Ill. The radio program, "The Greatest Story Ever Told," which has been broadcast over the American Broadcasting Company network every Sunday at 6:30 E.S.T. since last spring, has won wide acclaim from both secular and church sources. The program presents half-hour dramatized stories from the life of Christ and draws on fictionized characters and incidents to illustrate teachings given by Jesus. It is written in dignified language of today. The production is supervised by Fulton Oursler, senior editor of Reader's Digest. The name of the sponsor, the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, is mentioned only briefly, according to regulations of the Federal Communications Commission, and there is no "commercial."

In spite of its excellence, this program is not receiving a high "Hooper rating," and there is fear that it may be taken off the air. Church people are asked to listen to it, to advertise it, and to tell the Goodyear Rubber Company they approve it, as a means of insuring its continuance.

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Father Heuss Heads Episcopal Board of Education

John Heuss

NEW YORK, N. Y. The Rev. JOHN HEUSS has been elected the head of the Department of Christian Education of the National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church, beginning his work on November 1. He succeeds Dr. DANIEL A. MCGREGOR, for many years the secretary of this Department, who is well known in Council circles for his share in cooperative enterprises.

Father Heuss has been rector of St. Matthew's Church in Evanston, Illinois, since 1937. During this period the parish has increased its communicant strength from 375 to 1,041 and its church school enrollment from 202 to 474. He has been a member of the National Council since 1943 and a member of the Department of Promotion, being chairman of its division of college work.

Since the recent General Convention the National Department of Christian Education has been reorganized and its membership widened. Its co-opted members include Dr. Clark Kuebler and Dr. Adelaide Case. The Department plans to undertake the development of a new curriculum for use in the parish church.

Wichita Council Loses Mr. Meloy and Mrs. Lee

WICHITA, Kans. After five years of outstanding service, MRS. MERRIT R. LEE has resigned as Director of Religious Education for the Wichita Council of Churches. This work has been taken over by MRS. J. P. MCCLELLEN, who has assisted Mrs. Lee in various phases of the work.

During Mrs. Lee's tenure of office the weekday church school program greatly increased its scope and is recognized as one of the best in the country, although it is staffed with volunteer teachers. The work in leadership education has been aided through two annual community leadership schools and an annual laboratory school which trains weekday church school teachers. Mrs. Lee also was instrumental in organizing the Wichita Christian Youth Council.

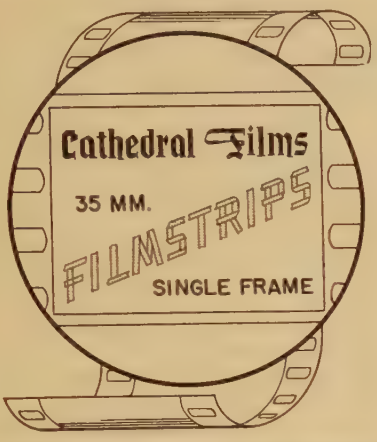
The Executive Secretary, the REV. JOHN W. MELOY submitted his resignation in August and has been elected Executive Secretary of the Louisville Council of Churches. Mr. Meloy came to Wichita ten years ago from the pastorate of the United Presbyterian Church at Bloomington, Indiana. The war years, with the expansion of the city, brought opportunities for growth in Council work. The enlargement of the educational program and the development of community churches in the Federal Housing Areas have been marks of the Council growth during these years.

Announcement of International Council Annual Meetings

CHICAGO, Ill. The 26th annual meetings of the International Council of Religious Education will be held at Grand Rapids, Michigan, February 8-14, 1948. More than twelve hundred religious educators from all parts of the United States and Canada are expected to attend.

The seventeen advisory sections, which are independent of the Council and, with the exception of the Lay Section, draw their membership from professional religious educators, will meet Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Committees will be in session Wednesday night and Thursday, and the Council itself will meet Friday and Saturday.

Dr. Arlo Ayres Brown, president of Drew University, Madison, New Jersey, and retiring chairman of the Council, will be honored at a dinner Friday night. Other features of the week included in early planning were two Sunday night mass meetings in cooperation with the Grand Rapids-Kent Council, a joint session of the sections on educational evangelism, a Fellowship luncheon, section dinners, and special Ash Wednesday worship services.



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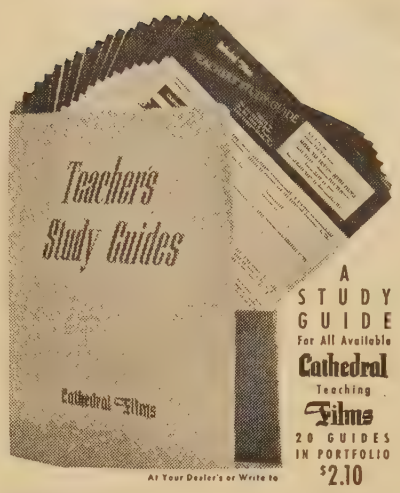
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Youth Week Plans Announced

CHICAGO, Ill. "Jesus Christ Is Lord," the theme of the recent Second World Conference of Christian Youth, has been selected as the theme of Youth Week, January 25-February 1, 1945, sponsored by the United Christian Youth Movement.

Sunday, January 25 will be observed as Denominational Day, with the theme "Jesus Christ—Lord of My Life." The emphasis will be on the principle that a personal relationship to Christ is basic to a well-developed personality. The closing Sunday will be Interdenominational Day, and the theme will be "Jesus Christ—Lord of All," with emphasis on the need for a great ecumenical church and the belief in the growing cooperation that is developing among Christians.

Church young people are urged to work cooperatively in their communities in planning and celebrating Youth Week. The emphases during the week will be on the following areas: local church, community, fellowship, preparation for leadership, and world outreach. Wide use of the public schools, newspapers, and radio in publicity and observances is encouraged.

As in other years, the Parshad Youth Week Awards granting college scholarships to outstanding Christian youth will be continued.

Youth Week had its beginning more than thirty years ago in the annual celebration of the birthday of the International Society of Christian Endeavor. In recent years Youth Sunday and Youth Week have been celebrated widely.

Special Packet of Youth Week Materials Now Available

A packet containing one copy of each of the six promotional pieces for use in connection with Youth Week 1948 is now available. It's a bargain—34c worth of material for ONLY 25c—and youth leaders will find the materials very valuable for study before ordering quantities of individual items.

In each packet you will find:

YOUTH WEEK MANUAL containing plans, projects, and complete suggestions for an effective observance. 15c each; 100 or more 12½c each.

DENOMINATIONAL DAY WORSHIP SERVICE, "Jesus Christ is Lord—Lord of My Life," for use in the local church. 3c each; 25 or more, 2c each; $1.35 per 100.

INTERDENOMINATIONAL DAY WORSHIP SERVICE, "Jesus Christ is Lord—Lord of All," an interdenominational youth service prepared especially for interchurch youth gatherings. 3c each; 25 or more, 2c each; $1.35 per 100.

PROMOTIONAL FLIER for general distribution. 3c each; 100 or more 2½c each.

RADIO PLAY for youth production during Youth Week. 10c each.

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Send 25c for your packet today or order individual items in quantities from your council, your denomination, or from the United Christian Youth Movement, 203 North Wabash Avenue, Chicago 1, Illinois.

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No. 13 FOR 1947

This newest Paramount gathering of Christmas program features should be heartily welcomed by all who are chosen to prepare and present the program in Church and School. With this book the work will be a joy.

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C—Children
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The Adventuress (British film; Eagle-Lion) Trevor Howard, Raymond Huntley, Deborah Kerr. *Melodrama* about an Irish girl who cherishes patriotic dreams of revenge on the British, finds chance for action when she falls in with nazi spies, is led a merry chase before seeing the light and making amends. . . . All the trappings for taut spy fare—windy moors, speeding trains, unsuspecting onlookers. Not quite up to the best of British melodrama, but *exciting enough.* **M,Y**

Banjo (RKO) Sharyn Moffett. *Drama.* When self-centered aunt with whom she is sent to live objects to her dog, small girl runs away to old home in the south. What happens when a wild cat attacks her there prove's dog's right to be indulged. . . . Too *contrived,* obviously tear-jerking for adults, too *frightening* in some scenes for children.

Cry Wolf (War.) Geraldine Brooks, Errol Flynn, Barbara Stanwyck. *Melodrama.* Young widow arrives at lonely estate to solve mystery of sudden death of husband to whom she had been secretly married; through eerie clues traces story of arrogant wealth, hereditary insanity, political scheming, etc. . . . Some good tries at suspense, but heavy direction, unclear motivation, morbidity of theme, ridiculously contrived solution, make of film an exceedingly *unpleasant* venture. **M**

Down to Earth (Col.) Roland Culver, James Gleason, Rita Hayworth, Larry Parks, Marc Platt. *Musical.* Terpsicore, goddess of song and dance, is permitted to descend from Mount Parnassus to prevent a Broadway producer's "desecration" of the arts by presenting a bawdy show called "Swinging the Muses." Then she is reluctant to return. . . . This was meant as a sequel to the excellent "Here Comes Mr. Jordan," but it *fails miserably* because it succumbs to a typical Hollywood "glamorization" treatment and emerges as neither tasteful picturization nor entertainment. **M,Y**

The Ghost and Mrs. Muir (Fox) Edna Best, Rex Harrison, George Sanders, Gene Tierney. *Drama.* Young English widow rents seaside cottage in early 1900's, finds it haunted—whether in her dreams or reality she is never quite sure—by the ghost of former owner, a vehement sea captain. Mutual approval established, they work out an arrangement that enlivens her years. . . . Overlong and anticlimatic toward the end, film is done with a leisurely gentleness that provides interesting and *different* entertainment. A few sequences are a bit risqué. **M,Y**

Mother Wore Tights (Fox) Dan Dailey, Mona Freeman, Betty Grable, Connie Marshall. *Comedy,* with music and dancing. A backstage story that, for once, is different. Instead of stereotyped triangular romance or struggles to win success, there is simply the relationship between two young girls and their parents, a vaudeville song-and-dance team. . . . Lavishly set and technicolored, film is a *delightful* domestic comedy. Strangely, considering setting, there is no drinking. **M,Y,C**

Northwest Outpost (Rep.) Nelson Eddy, Hans Haas, Elsa Lancaster, Ilona Massey. *Operetta* set in Russian fort in California in 1837, with convict laborers, frontier guards and an Easter choir for the choruses, an American adventurer in the service of the prince as the hero and a lovely and mysterious visitor from St. Petersburg to provide the romance. . . . A conventional operetta plot, rather stilted, with heavy direction. But some *good singing,* considerable adult comedy. **M,Y**

The Romance of Rosy Ridge (MGM) Van Johnson, Janet Leigh, Thomas Mitchell, Selena Royle. *Drama.* Inter-neighbor strife in the Ozarks following the Civil War as background for a romance that persists even after the wandering young schoolteacher has admitted his "yankee" past. . . . An honest story, *homely,* with authentic local color even if the latter is a bit self-consciously presented. **M,Y**

Seven Keys to Baldpate (RKO) Arthur Shields, Philip Terry, Jacqueline White. *Melodrama.* Fifth filming of the classic mystery novel about strange happenings at winter-closed inn. . . . Standard mystery trappings, monotonous direction result in *unexciting* production. **M,Y**

Slave Girl (Univ.) Albert Dekker, George Brent, Yvonne DeCarlo. *Comedy* about an American diplomat who arrives in Tripoli in early 1800's to ransom seamen, gets all mixed up with Hollywood's idea of oriental adventure: harems, cruel pashas, desert bandits, torture, etc. . . . Running comment by talking camel does nothing to lift film above *routine, infantile* class. **M,Y**

Something in the Wind (Univ.) John Dall, Deanna Durbin, Donald O'Connor, Chas. Winninger. *Comedy* about a girl disk jockey who sets out to punish stuffy young millionaire who mistakenly thinks she "has something on" his late grandfather, ends up by falling in love with him. . . . Stumbling, *inane* plot merely excuse for a number of songs—some good, some in poor taste—fashion show, glamorous settings, etc. In spite of strenuous effort to be energetic, entertaining, a contrived, heavily moving production. **M,Y**

†**Stairway to Heaven** (British film; Univ.) Marius Goring, Kim Hunter, Roger Livesey, Raymond Massey, David Niven. *Drama.* The experiences of an R.A.F. pilot after he is shot down over the channel: in the world of the living, where real people move in technicolor; and in the beyond, where his hallucinations create for him a strange realm of dull tones in which officials, past-dead men and women ponder his right to join them. . . . A *thoroughly delightful,* different combination of realism and fantasy, with subtle, adult humor, incisive characterizations, an over-all sparkle and delicacy. **M,Y**

†**This Happy Breed** (British film; Univ.) Celia Johnson, John Mills, Robert Newton,

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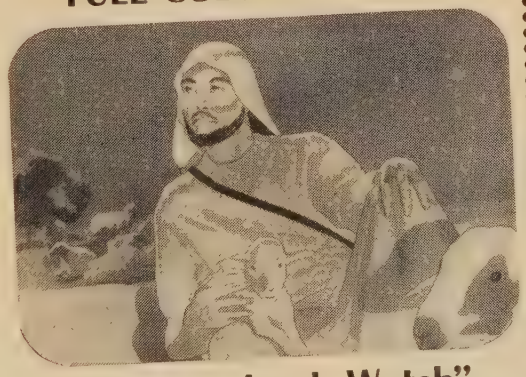

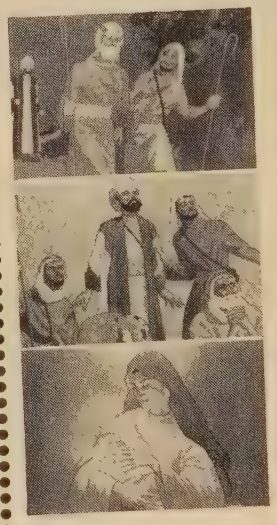

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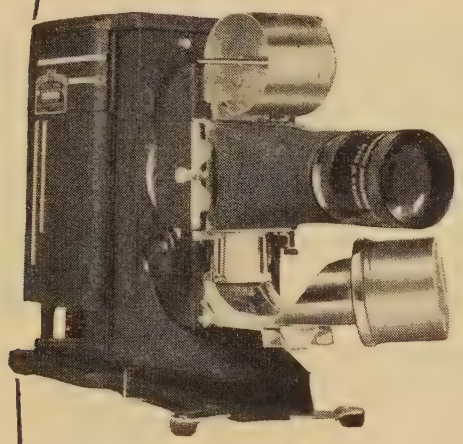

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The Trouble with Women (Par.) Brian Donlevy, Ray Milland, Theresa Wright. *Comedy* about a psychology professor whose refusal to grant girl reporter an interview leads to all kinds of complications as she and her newspaper frame him to obtain vengeance. . . . Inept direction and a stereotyped plot waste talents of cast. *Feeble.* **M,Y**

Turkey's 200,000,000 (The March of Time) *Documentary* presenting current political, economic, military situation which U. S. loan is designed to alter. . . . Remarkably revealing shots give *comprehensive* survey of background to loan; does not blink at explosive possibilities for the future. **M,Y**

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This first film produced by the Protestant Film Commission is being "premiered" in 100 cities throughout the United States and Canada on November 11.

The film is keyed to the theme of "Worldwide Evangelism," the churches' mission study theme for 1947-48. It tells the story of two brothers. As college football stars, Peter is the dazzling runner who scores the touchdowns and Bob is the one who makes the scores possible by his skilful interference. Peter becomes an attorney, marries his college sweetheart, and concentrates on becoming a "success," to the exclusion of all other interests except his young son.

Bob, as a young interne, is thrilled with the work of healing people but fumes because so much time seems to be spent by doctors in prescribing for imaginary ills of a restless social set. In church one Sunday, as Peter makes notes on his next day's jury plea, Bob gets an inspiration from the sermon which causes him to become a medical missionary to China.

When his young son is accidentally killed, Peter, already strained from overwork, becomes ill and loses interest in his legal career. To help him recuperate, his wife arranges for him to visit his brother in China.

At first, Peter is disdainful of the poverty-stricken Chinese among whom Bob is "wasting his life." However, Peter begins to change when he meets Wong, a devout Christian who had lost his fortune and family during the war. When the war reaches the mission station, Peter risks his life to save Wong, pinned under the wreckage. The supreme faith of the dying man opens Peter's eyes

to things "beyond our own," and he finds a new life opening before him.

Produced by an outstanding Hollywood producer, and acted by professional movie actors, this film is excellent in both content and technical quality. It won the enthusiastic approval of members of the Audio-Visual Education Workshop, where it was first shown.

Reading for Democracy Juvenile Book List

CHICAGO, Ill. The fourth annual book list for children has been published by the Chicago office of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. The foreword was written by Pearl Buck. These are suggested as suitable gifts or as additions to the church school library.

The thirty-six books on the 1948 list are the following:

For Readers Over Twelve

Man's Way, Ralph and Adelin Linton
Larger Than the Sky, Covelle Newcomb
We Have Tomorrow, Arna Bontemps
Sugar Bush, Dorothea Dana
Haym Saloman, Howard Fast
Heart of Danger, Howard Pease
Willow Hill, Phyllis A. Whitney
Gid Granger Robert Davis
Anchor Man, Jesse Jackson
A Sea Between, Lavinia R. Davis
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Nikoline's Choice, Margaret Maw

For Readers Eight to Eleven

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Bright April, Marguerite de Angeli
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The Hundred Dresses, Eleanor Estes
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Editorials

Would You Use Jinnie Backstage?

IT IS ALWAYS EMBARRASSING to quote a joke from a certain popular monthly digest: one's hearers cannot help revealing that they have all read it. Perhaps there is not quite as much risk in using an incident from an article.

In the October number a high school and college teacher says, "I'm Going to Stick to Teaching." It is a most heartening story for those who have been distressed about what is happening to our schools. If all the teachers like this one would stick and if there were more like her to do the sticking, all would yet be well.

Let this teacher introduce us to Jinnie Carver, one of her first pupils. Now Jinnie was clumsy, awkward, plain. So, when the teacher planned a program where little girls were to be rose-buds, she did, one fears, exactly what most church people would do: she planned to use the unattractive girl backstage. (Honestly now, isn't that where most church Jinnies perform?)

But the school principal had something of the great teacher in her soul. Please note, she asked the teacher what she was going to do with the girl: she knew Jinnie. She urged Jinnie's voice and the fact that her mother would make a lovely costume as reasons for her being a rose: she knew the family. And when the teacher stumblingly said, "But . . . ," that principal proved that she knew something else that transcended these reasons, because it lies so close to the heart of all true teaching. She said, "Listen. Every person needs, if only just once in her life, to feel that she is a rose in the limelight, not a prompter behind the curtain. Remember that—it will be more important to your success as a teacher than anything else, even scholarship, necessary as that is."[1]

The teacher took the advice. Jinnie became a reasonably lovely rose, though a bit full-blown, and later blossomed into a pleasantly self-confident young lady. And that teacher has solid ground for her belief that this result depended largely upon an unprepossessing girl's having been a rose in that class song.

All of which adds up to this little preachment: our public schools and churches are all too sadly afflicted with performance-itis, a virulent disease that too often gives first place to those whom other circumstances have already made outstanding, and crowds backstage those who start with a handicap of shyness or something else.

Now a performance has its place; plays, concerts, football teams, choirs and bands are necessary parts of our life, but the true leader sees behind the performance to *what is happening to life*. He asks if Jim's ability as a half back is making him too bumptious and if Joe is getting bitter through social neglect. Such a teacher *may* win the championship or get a write-up in the local paper for the church play, but this is a by-product of what he is getting at with Jim and Joe, instead of the reverse. The poorest voice teacher in the Illinois schools could not have prevented Andy from being a fine tenor—God and family and nature had looked after that. But only a volunteer leader of an intermediate boys' club meeting Sunday evenings put her finger on his social shyness and began to work on that. And thus a whole life was changed.

Is not that what a certain set of marching orders called the Great Commission was getting at? And those marching orders still hold.

[1] From the *Reader's Digest* October 1947. Copyright McCall Corp. *Redbook*, July, 1947.

Let Us Give Thanks

WHEN CLARENCE CARTER'S "Let Us Give Thanks" was voted the most popular painting at the Carnegie Institute's exhibition of 1943 it was perhaps because it is so thoroughly and undisguisedly American. This is the America we know and love: sturdy, hard-working, self-reliant, proud of a clean home and well-decked table, and quietly happy with sons, daughters, and grandchildren sharing the common heritage of simple, unfeigned piety.

This, too, is America: the porch with its turned supports and unadorned weatherboard walls; the open collars and rolled-up sleeves of the men, the pitcher of milk and the home-made apple pie. In its artistic form the painting likewise exemplifies American traits: it is clear-cut and substantial, more concerned with solid reality than with refinements of style.

The man who painted this scene is himself a characteristic product of America. He grew up at Portsmouth, Ohio, as the son of a postal clerk who died while the boy was still in high school. Through a variety of jobs Carter helped support his family and subsequently worked his way through art school. Success as an independent painter enabled him to tour Europe and Africa without, however, severing his roots in his native country. During the depression he painted several murals for the government-sponsored agencies that rescued so many of our most promising artists. In 1938 he accepted a position to teach art at the Carnegie Institute of Technology, and finally moved to a farm in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, where he is happy painting growing things and the people who live close to the soil.

Well may Clarence Carter call on us to give thanks. God has given us a great and fertile land where we can live and worship him in freedom. He has kept from us the horrors of war and the hunger that threatens the lives of so many human beings abroad. Because of their desperate plight our own tables cannot be so richly decked as in former times, but we should not begrudge the hungry a share of the bounty God has again provided for us. Let us show our gratitude to him through deeds of Christian charity and, with this American family, make every day a day of Thanksgiving. As the old hymn so well phrased it:

"For the blessings of the field,
For the stores the gardens yield:
Flocks, that whiten all the plain,
Yellow sheaves of ripened grain:

"All that spring with bounteous hand
Scatters o'er the smiling hand;
All that liberal autumn pours
For her rich o'erflowing stores,—

"These to thee, our God, we owe,
Source whence all our blessings flow;
And for these our souls shall raise
Grateful vows and solemn praise."

Walter L. Nathan

What Marcia Learned

MARCIA WAS FIVE YEARS OLD when she met a new neighbor lady downstairs. Now the lady asked, "What did you learn at Sunday school?" But Marcia had no answer until a week or more had passed. Then she sought out the lady and said, "I can tell you what I learned at Sunday school."

"What was it, my dear?"

"I learned that when you play with other kids, you should share your toys. I learned that if you want to have friends, you will be kind. An' I learned how to pray."

And the lady downstairs adds that she told the pastor of Marcia's church, one of her old friends, that he certainly had a good Sunday school.

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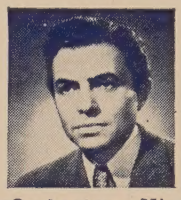

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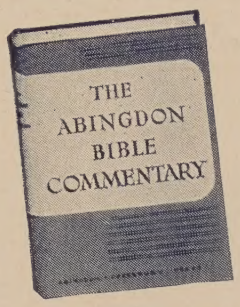

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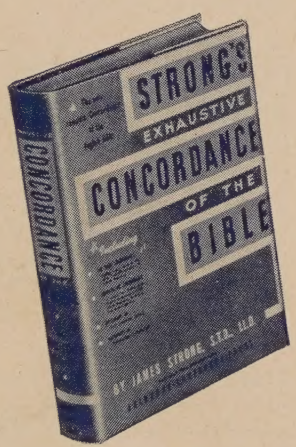

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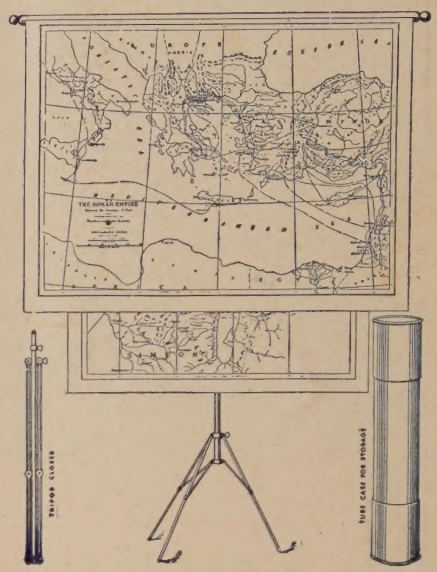

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